

Mardi Gras King Cake

Ingredients

Cake

8 tablespoons butter, melted
3/4 cup milk, lukewarm
2 large eggs + 1 large egg yolk, white reserved, at room temperature
3 1/2 cups All-Purpose Flour
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup Baker's Special Dry Milk or nonfat dry milk
1 1/4 teaspoons salt
2 1/2 teaspoons instant yeast
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Filling

2/3 cup packed light brown sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

Icing

2 cups confectioners' sugar
pinch of salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 to 3 tablespoons milk, enough to make a thick but pourable glaze

Garnish

yellow, purple, and green fine sparkling sugars

Directions

1. **To prepare the dough:** Using a stand mixer, electric hand mixer, or bread machine, mix and knead all of the dough ingredients together to form a smooth, very silky dough. You may try kneading this dough with your hands, if desired; but be advised it's very sticky and soft.
2. Allow the dough to rise, covered, for 1 hour. It'll become puffy, though it probably won't double in size.
3. Transfer the soft dough to a lightly greased work surface. Pat and stretch it into a 20" x 10" rectangle. Let the dough rest while you prepare the filling.
4. **To prepare the filling:** Combine brown sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl. Add butter to mixture and mix well.
5. Spread filling on half of the long side of the dough. Fold dough in half, covering the filling. Pat dough down firmly so the dough will stick together. Cut into three long strips. Press the tops of the strips together and braid the strips. Press the ends together at the

bottom. Gently stretch the braid so it measures 20 inches again. Shape into a circle/oval and press the edges together to close.

6. Transfer the ring onto the baking sheet. The dough will be very extensible, i.e., it'll stretch as you handle it, so pick it up and position it on the pan quickly and gently.
7. Cover and let rise for about an hour, until it's puffy. Preheat the oven to 350°F while the dough rises.
8. Whisk the reserved egg white with 1 tablespoon water and brush it over the risen cake.
9. Bake the cake for 20 minutes, then tent it lightly with aluminum foil. Bake it for an additional 30 minutes, until it's a rich golden brown.
10. Remove the cake from the oven. After about 15 minutes, transfer it from the baking sheet to a rack to cool.
11. **To make the icing:** Beat together all of the icing ingredients, dribbling in the final 2 teaspoons milk until the icing is thick yet pourable.
12. Pour the icing over the completely cooled cake. While it's still sticky, sprinkle with alternating bands of yellow, purple, and green sugars.