

Moroccan Mint Tea Party



Moroccan Orange and Almond Cake

Moroccans are famous for their hospitality so there's always plenty of tea and cake on offer to visitors! This recipe is a speciality in Morocco and has been shared with us by Nadya, the wife of our vet at SPANA's centre in Chemaia. Nadya is pictured overleaf with her husband, Younes, and their two children.

Top tips

- Use bright and colourful decor such as purples and bright pinks. Use low lighting and candles.
- For a real Moroccan feel, ditch the chairs and fill up the space with cushions and pillows to sit on!





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Ingredients:

Makes: 1 (8 in) orange and almond cake, 8-10 slices

1 orange

115g (4 oz) softened butter and extra for greasing

115g (4 oz) golden caster sugar

2 eggs (beaten)

175g (6 oz) semolina

100g (3½ oz) ground almonds

1½ teaspoon baking powder

Icing sugar for dusting

For the syrup

150ml (¼ pint) orange juice (freshly squeezed)

70g (2½ oz) caster sugar

Optional: 8 crushed cardamom pods

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Instructions:

Prep: 40min · Cook: 40min

Ready in: 1hr 20min

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C / Gas Mark 4. Place the shelf in the centre of the oven. Grease and line a 20cm (8 in) cake tin with baking parchment.
2. Grate the rind from the orange, reserving some for the decoration, and squeeze the juice from one half.
3. Place the butter, orange rind and sugar in a bowl and beat together until fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs.
4. In a separate bowl, mix the semolina, ground almonds and baking powder, then fold into the cream mixture with the orange juice.
5. Spoon the batter into the tin and bake for 30-40 minutes, or until well risen and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes.
6. To make the syrup, place the orange juice, sugar and cardamom pods in a pan over low heat and stir until the sugar has dissolved. Bring to the boil and simmer until syrupy – our tester found it could take up to 40 minutes! Also your syrup will be thicker if you make it the day before.
7. Turn the cake out into a deep serving dish.
8. Using a skewer, make holes over the surface of the warm cake.
9. Drizzle the syrup over the cake, then set aside for 30 minutes.
10. Dust with a layer of icing sugar and decorate as desired with orange zest, crushed pistachios or edible flowers.

