

Hazelnut meringue cake

Ingredients

1 cup (125gm) ground roasted hazelnuts
4 egg whites
1 cup castor sugar
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp white vinegar

200gm dark chocolate, chopped
60gm butter

125gm packet cream cheese
60 gm butter
1/3 cup castor sugar
1/4 cup kahlua or Tia Maria (I used frangelco)
300ml thickened cream
berries - strawberries, raspberries, blueberries are best



Method

If you don't have suitable rings, first make two rings from cardboard strips about 4cm wide - circles need to end up about 22-24cm diameter. Cut strips of cooking foil and line the cardboard rings (just snip the edges of the foil so that you can fold it over top and bottom of the strips). This will give you rings to make two circular meringues the same size.

Toast hazelnuts - 5 min in the oven or in open pan; cool.

Beat egg whites in small bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, beating well after each addition. Beat until sugar is dissolved. Fold in vanilla, vinegar and hazelnuts. Spread into rings on two oven trays covered with baking paper. Bake in moderate oven 25 minutes or until firm. Cool.

Make the cream: have butter and cream cheese at room temperature. Beat cream cheese, butter and sugar in a small bowl until light and fluffy, but don't overbeat. Add Kahlua (or whatever) and cream, and beat until combined - again, don't overdo it, or it will turn into butter.

Melt chocolate and butter together; spread evenly over bottom surface of each meringue layer. Place bottom layer so that the chocolate bit is uppermost. Spread half the cream onto this chocolate-covered layer. Put in some berries if you want them in the middle. Put the other layer on top (chocolate side down). Spread with remaining cream and decorate with berries and/or chocolate.