

# ***A Clue in the Crumbs***

## **Book 13 of the Key West Food Critic Mysteries**

### Recipe

#### **Chocolate Loaf Cake with Vanilla Drizzle**

One of the challenges in the UK Bakes! competition is a loaf cake. Hayley Snow's mother makes this cake, which is a great recipe if you don't have the motivation to make a layer cake. You could frost it with chocolate icing, and the chocoholics in your company would applaud you. I like chocolate, but I also like vanilla and this checked both boxes.

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp espresso powder, optional
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup unsalted butter, melted
- ½ cup milk, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ¼ cup boiling water

**Ingredients for the vanilla glaze:**

- 3/4 cup sifted confectioner sugar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350.

In one bowl, place the flour, the espresso powder, the cocoa powder, baking powder, and the salt. (I sifted them together, as some of my ingredients came out of the freezer and were a little lumpy.)

In a small pan, melt the stick of butter and set it inside cool.

In a second bowl, whisk together the eggs and sugar. Whisk in the cooled butter, the milk, and the vanilla extract.

Whisk the two sets of ingredients together, and then add the hot water and stir that in.

Prepare an 8 x 4 loaf pan by greasing, and then fitting a piece of parchment paper inside so a couple inches stick up along the longer edges. This forms a sling that will make it easy to remove the cake.

Add the chocolate batter to the pan and bake for 40 to 45 minutes, checking with a cake tester to be sure it's done but not dry. Let the cake cool on a rack for half an hour, and then remove it to a pretty plate.

In a small bowl, mix the sifted confectioners' sugar with a tablespoon or two of milk and two teaspoons of vanilla. Once the cake is completely cooled, paint on the glaze. Serve exactly as it is, or with ice cream.