

The Mango Murders

Book 15 of the Key West Food Critic Mysteries

Recipe

Upside-Down Mango Cake

In the fifteenth food critic mystery, it's May, and that means mango season in Key West. You can walk around town and see mango trees absolutely loaded with the fat and gorgeous fruit. Locals give away sacks of them, or so I'm told. Sadly, John and I are usually in Connecticut by then—but I can use my imagination to make myself drool with over my fictional mango onslaught. Hayley Snow's mother Janet is catering an event on a catamaran, and will be serving lots of dishes containing mango. That means I'll be coming up with lots of mango-themed recipes, even if I have to use fruit from the grocery store.

This mango upside down cake is a riff on the traditional pineapple and just as delicious. Mangoes have a weird pit hidden in the middle of the fruit that you must cut around, so your yield may be smaller than expected. I made this cake with one mango but I could happily have used two.

Ingredients

- 1-2 mangoes
- 8-9 Maraschino cherries
- 12 Tbsp butter, divided
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1 and 1/2 cup unbleached flour
- 1 and 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup milk

Preheat the oven to 350. Butter a 9 inch cake pan, bottom and sides. (I used some of the butter above, figuring there's plenty in the recipe already.) Cut a piece of parchment paper to the size of the pan, put it in the bottom and butter that too.

Peel and cut the mangoes into slices or cubes.

Melt 4 oz of butter in a small pan. Add the honey and brown sugar and heat, stirring until smooth. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and then place the fruit into the pan, in whatever design you choose. Dot with maraschino cherries.

Meanwhile, combine dry ingredients except for the sugar in one bowl, and measure milk into a glass measuring cup. In another bowl, beat the butter and sugar and vanilla with a mixer until they are light in color. Add the eggs one at a time, beating after each. On low speed, add the dry ingredients in three parts, alternating with the milk until everything is mixed nicely.

Pour the batter over the fruit and bake for about 38-40 minutes until lightly browned or until a test knife comes out clean. Let the cake rest on a rack for an hour. Then run a knife around the edge, place your serving plate over the top, and gently invert the cake onto the platter. Tap the pan to help it along if it doesn't drop out immediately.

Serve warm or at room temperature.