

Strawberry Almond Cakes
"3 Smart Techniques for Better (and Beautiful) Strawberry Desserts,"
Melissa Clark, *The New York Times*, "A Good Appetite" column
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"These tender, strawberry-filled almond cakes are a riff on financiers, diminutive French pastries made from almond flour and browned butter. To get the most intensity from the berries, they are briefly roasted before being mixed into the batter. Roasting condenses the berries' flavor and helps keep them from leaking juices into the cakes, which can make their light crumb heavy and a bit damp. Serve these cakes by themselves as a simple dessert or teatime snack, or with a scoop of strawberry ice cream or sorbet for something richer and fancier. Although they're at their crisp-edged best served on the day they're baked, they'll keep for a day or two stored airtight at room temperature."

Yield: 12 Cakes

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes

7 ounces/200 grams fresh strawberries, cut into ½-inch chunks (about 1½ cups)
1 tablespoon granulated sugar, plus more for the pan
¾ cup/170 grams unsalted butter, plus more for the pan
2 cups/230 grams confectioners' sugar
1 cup/100 grams almond flour
¾ cup/90 grams all-purpose flour
¾ teaspoon fine sea or table salt
5 large egg whites
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

PREPARATION

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees. In a small bowl, mix strawberries with 1 tablespoon of granulated sugar and transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Roast until the strawberries have released a bit of juice and are just tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Set aside to cool.
2. In a small saucepan, melt butter, letting it cook until it turns nut brown and smells toasted, about 5 minutes. Pour into a heatproof bowl and let cool. (Do not scrape up any black bits from the bottom of the pot.)
3. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine sugar, almond flour, all-purpose flour and salt. Using an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment and set on low speed (or use a whisk and a strong arm), beat in egg whites until the flour mixture is damp. Add butter and beat on medium-high speed (or vigorously by hand) until very smooth, about 2 minutes. Beat in vanilla. At this point, the batter can be used immediately or refrigerated for up to 4 days without the strawberries.
4. Right before baking, drain the roasted strawberries from their liquid and blot on a paper towel or clean cloth. Fold the roasted strawberries into the batter. (You may have about 1 to 2 tablespoons of strawberry syrup left to add to yogurt or seltzer.)
5. Butter 12 (½-cup) muffin cups and coat all over with a little granulated sugar. Divide batter across the cups, and bake until financiers are golden brown and the tops spring back when lightly pressed, 15 to 25 minutes. Cool on a wire rack before unmolding.