

Cointreau-Glazed Cranberry Clementine Tea Cake

Cake:

4 ounces (1 stick, 1/2 cup) unsalted butter, at room temperature
3 ounces (1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons) cream cheese, at room temperature
1 1/4 cups sugar (preferably organic cane sugar)
zest of 3 clementines (or other medium tangerines)
3 eggs, at room temperature
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups fresh cranberries, halved (if frozen, probably no need to defrost first)

Glaze:

1/2 cup powdered sugar (sifted if clumpy)
4 tablespoons Cointreau (or other orange liqueur), or enough to make a thin glaze

Make the cake:

Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 325°. Line an 8×4 or 9×5" loaf pan with a sling of parchment paper (or just shove a piece of paper in there, creasing the folds flat). (Lacking parchment, you can generously grease the pan and dust it with flour.)

Combine the butter, cream cheese, sugar and zest in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat on medium until light and fluffy, 3 - 4 minutes. Add the eggs one at a time, beating until combined after each addition, and scraping down the sides of the bowl and the paddle as needed. (The mixture may break, and that's ok.) Stir in the vanilla. Sift together the flour, baking powder and salt, then add it to the batter, stirring on low speed until just combined. Fold the batter a few times with a rubber spatula, scraping the paddle and bottom of the bowl, to make sure the batter is thoroughly combined, and that any zest clumps are distributed throughout the batter. Gently fold in the cranberries. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top.

Bake the cake until a tester inserted into the center comes out clean, or with a few moist crumbs attached, 1 1/4 - 1 1/2 hours. Let the cake cool for 10 or 15 minutes, then remove it from the pan, and peel away the parchment. Poke it all over the top and sides with a toothpick or skewer.

Make the glaze:

While the cake is cooling, whisk together the powdered sugar and cointreau until you have a glaze that's about as thin as half and half. Brush the glaze all over the top and sides of the warm cake. Let the cake cool completely, at least one hour.

