

FIG & WALNUT CAKE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH CAKE

In my role as restaurant pastry chef I always look to showcase seasonal ingredients, so when fresh figs start showing up (in the Northeast) in the summer, and all the way into the fall, I make this rich and spicy cake. I'm not a big fan of the seedy texture figs can have, so for this cake I puree them, which gives the cake moistness with just the perfect hint of natural sweetness. The cake needs no frosting and pairs perfectly with just a simple sweetened whipped cream. This is truly my favorite way to eat figs!

Cooking spray

1 cup sugar

1/4 cup grapeseed oil

2 large eggs

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground cloves

1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 cup half-and-half

1 cup cake flour, sifted

1 cup pureed fresh figs (about 1 pint figs)

1/2 cup chopped pecans

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar, for dusting

1/2 recipe [Whipped Cream](#)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line the bottom of a 9-inch cake pan with a parchment paper round and coat the pan and paper with cooking spray.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the sugar and oil together on medium speed. Reduce the speed to low, add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the vanilla. Beat in the cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg, then beat in the baking soda and salt. Alternate beating in the half-and-half and cake flour in several additions, ending with flour. Finally, beat in the fig puree and pecans.

Bake for 12 minutes. Rotate the pan front to back and bake until a cake tester comes out clean, about 12 minutes. Let cool in the pan.

To serve, invert the cake onto a cake plate. Dust the top with confectioners' sugar. Serve warm or at room temperature with a dollop of the whipped cream.