

## Lemon Heaven Cake

<http://userealbutter.com/2014/03/20/lemon-heaven-cake-recipe/>  
*based on class recipes from The Culinary School of the Rockies*

2 9×3-inch round lemon chiffon cakes  
1 1/2 cups limoncello soaking syrup  
6+ cups lemon Swiss meringue buttercream frosting  
2-3 cups lemon curd

### lemon chiffon cake

14.5 oz. (about 3 cups) cake flour (I use all purpose flour at 8500 ft.)  
8.75 oz. (about 2 cups + 2 tbsps) confectioner's sugar  
0.5 oz. (1 tsp) baking powder (omitted at 8500 ft.)  
6.75 oz. whole milk  
6 oz. canola oil  
3.25 oz. (2 large) eggs  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
4 oz. lemon juice  
13 oz. egg whites  
9.5 oz. (1 cup + 3 tbsps) granulated sugar

Oven 375°F. Prep two 9×3-inch round pans or two 11×17-inch sheet pans by buttering bottom and sides. Place parchment in pan and butter the parchment. Sift flour, confectioner's sugar, and (if using) baking powder together into a large bowl. Mix the milk, canola oil, eggs, vanilla extract, and lemon juice into the flour mixture until combined. Whip the egg whites and granulated sugar together to medium peaks. Gently fold the whipped whites into the batter in thirds and make sure the mixture is uniform or you may end up with separation during baking. Do not slam the cake pans on the counter to pop the air bubbles, you WANT the air bubbles in the batter. Bake until set, about 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and remove from pan. Let cool on a cooling rack. Makes two 11×17-inch sheets or two 9×3-inch rounds.

### limoncello soaking syrup

4 oz. (0.57 cups) sugar  
4 oz. water  
2-4 oz. limoncello

Heat the sugar and water in a small saucepan over high heat, stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Let it come to a boil. Turn off the heat and let the sugar syrup cool. Stir in the limoncello. Makes 1.5 cups.

### **lemon swiss meringue buttercream**

8 oz. egg whites  
16 oz. sugar  
1 lb. unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
1/4 tsp lemon oil, I used Boyajian brand\*  
grated zest of 1 lemon (preferably organic)  
5-6 tbsps fresh lemon juice

Combine egg whites and sugar in a Kitchenaid mixing bowl. Whisk constantly over a simmering water bath (without letting the water touch the bottom of the mixing bowl) until 140°F is reached. Place the bowl on the mixer with whisk attachment and whip until stiff. Turn down whip speed to 3rd and whip until cool to the touch (this takes a while – should be cooler than your hand). Change to a paddle and gradually add soft butter by tablespoon pieces. Mix to emulsify. Once desired consistency has been reached, add vanilla, lemon oil, lemon zest, and lemon juice. Makes about 6 cups.

### **lemon curd**

6 oz. fresh lemon juice, strained  
9 oz. (1 cup + 1 1/2 tbsps) granulated sugar  
3 oz. butter  
3 oz. heavy cream  
pinch of salt  
6 eggs  
1 tbsp finely grated lemon zest

Boil lemon juice, sugar, butter, heavy cream, and salt in a saucepan. Place eggs in a bowl and whisk to loosen up the whites and yolks. Temper hot lemon mixture into eggs. Add mixture back into saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly until thickened and nappé consistency. It should be quite thick or else it will be too runny in the final product. Strain through a mesh sieve. Stir in the lemon zest. Place plastic wrap directly on curd and cool over an ice bath. Refrigerate when chilled. Can be frozen for up to 4-6 months. Makes 3.5 cups.

**Assemble the cake:** Cut each cake horizontally into 2 layers of equal thickness so that you have four layers in total. Don't be afraid to trim the domed tops (if you have domed tops) – you can save those for snacking on later. Fill a squeeze bottle with the limoncello syrup. For ease of spreading, I like to fill a pastry bag fitted with a large plain tip with the lemon buttercream frosting. It allows me to pipe the frosting onto the cake rather than smearing it and possibly damaging the chiffon cake.

Set first cake layer cut-side up (browned-side down) on serving plate with wax paper strips tucked partly under the edges of the cake. Reserve the other bottom half (browned on one side) for the top. Drizzle a quarter of the limoncello syrup evenly over the cake. Pipe a layer of about a fifth of the buttercream (concentric circles that don't have to touch) over the cake, using an icing spatula to smooth it out and fill in the gaps. Spread a layer of lemon curd about 1/4-inch thick over the buttercream. Set the second

cake layer on top of the lemon curd and repeat with soaking syrup, buttercream, and curd. For the fourth layer, place the cake layer brown-side down on an extra plate. Drizzle the rest of the soaking syrup on the cut-side of the cake. Carefully place the soaked cake layer, cut-side down (brown-side up!) on top of the main cake. The cake should be strong enough to handle this kind of manipulation, but you have to be gentle with it. Crumb coat the sides of the cake with buttercream then finish frosting the entire cake with remaining buttercream. Serve at room temperature. Will keep in refrigerator, covered, for up to five days. Serves 10-12.