

Plain and Simple Almond Cake

5 large eggs, separated, at room temperature
1 C (200 g) sugar
1 Tsp vanilla extract
pinch of salt
2 C (200 g) almond flour (I used Trader Joe's Almond Meal)
Powdered sugar for dusting (optional)

Center a rack in the oven and preheat to 350°F. Butter a 9" round cake pan; it should be at least 2 " deep. You could also use a 9" springform pan. Butter the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper and butter the paper. Dust the pan with additional almond flour and tap out the excess.

Whisk the 5 egg yolks with all but 2 tablespoons of the sugar in a large bowl until the mixture thickens and lightens in color. Whisk in the vanilla extract.

Working in the bowl of a stand mixer with a whisk attachment, beat the egg whites and salt until they turn opaque, about 1 minute. Sprinkle in the remaining 2 T sugar and continue to whip until the whites are shiny and hold medium peaks. You don't want completely stiff, stand up at attention whites.

Using a flexible spatula, stir about one quarter of the whites into the yolks to lighten them – no need to be gentle here. Scrape the rest of the whites onto the yolks, spoon over 1/3 to 1/2 of the almond flour and fold the mixtures together. Now's the time to be gentle but not too thorough. They should be only partially blended. Spoon over the rest of the almond flour and continue folding until you have a light, homogeneous batter. Pour the batter into the pan and shimmy the pan gently to settle it and level the top.

Bake the cake for 33-38 minutes, turning the pan around after 20 minutes, or until the top is golden brown and springy to the touch; the sides will have pulled away from the pan a bit. Transfer the pan to a cooling rack and let the cake rest for 5 minutes, then run a table knife around the edges of the pan and invert the cake onto the rack. Carefully remove the pan and peel away the parchment paper; turn the cake over to cool completely right side up. When the cake is cool, dust the top with powdered sugar if you're using it.

Enjoy!!