



The Edible Garden with Alison Alexander

There is rarely only one possible way to prepare a recipe. It may be a change of ingredients that are seasonal or it may be putting your own spin on the dish e.g. adding some chilli which was not in the original.

I like using recipes that give me variations on the base version which allows me to use what is available at the time. I make this cake quite often but rarely is it the same. The cake is ideal cut into pieces to serve with a cuppa or serve as a dessert with a lovely “eggy” custard. The slice is also a good “traveller” – good to take to meetings, on a picnic or pack in lunch boxes.



I am also including my favourite recipe for scones – not with strawberry jam and cream but cheese and herbs. Who do you think of when you hear scones mentioned? The CWA of course! This wonderful organization will celebrate its 98th year on 11th August and there are big plans for its centenary in 2022. What Ruth Fairfax and her small band of women started has developed into a widespread organization that does amazing work, particularly at times of emergency. Each year the Queensland Country Women’s Association celebrates its anniversary with Scone Day which is held on or near the 11th August.

Seasonal Fruit Tray Bake

1 ½ cups self-raising flour
½ cup desiccated coconut
½ cup caster sugar
1 ¼ cups reduced fat vanilla yoghurt
2 eggs
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Fruit – see below
2 dessertspoons raw or demerara sugar
Icing sugar

1. Pre-heat oven to 160° (fan forced). Line an 18cm X 28cm slice tin with baking paper or grease well.
2. Combine flour, coconut and caster sugar in a mixing bowl. In a separate bowl lightly whisk together yoghurt, eggs, oil, lemon zest and vanilla.
3. Pour the liquid mixture into the dry mixture and quickly and lightly stir to combine but do not overmix. Using a spatula spread the mixture into the prepared tin and smooth the top. Lightly press fruit into the slice mixture and sprinkle over the raw or demerara sugar.
4. Bake in the oven for about 35 – 40 minutes and until the slice is set in the centre when tested with a wooden skewer and the top is golden. Remove from the oven and rest in the tin for 5 minutes then unmould on to a cooling rack. Dust lightly with icing sugar and cut the slice into fingers to serve.

Fruit suitable for the slice:

- Halved or sliced strawberries
- Berries – raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, etc.
- Sliced stone fruit – plums, apricots, peaches, nectarines
- Rhubarb – raw cut in thin slices or lightly poached
- Figs – cut in thick slices and paired with raspberries
- Sliced apple, with or without skin – good paired with berries or rhubarb

Cheese and Herb Scones

250g self-raising flour

pinch of salt, cayenne and mustard powder

60g butter

60g mature cheddar cheese, grated

30g parmesan, grated

1 stick celery, very finely diced

¼ cup finely chopped herbs such as parsley, chives, chervil, fennel or dill

approximately 1 cup milk

1. Pre-heat oven to 210deg.C. Line a scone tray with baking paper.
2. Sift flour, salt, cayenne and mustard powder into a mixing bowl. Rub in the butter.
3. Add cheeses, celery and herbs and stir to mix. Add about ¾ cup milk and mix with a bread and butter knife – if the mixture is too stiff then add the remaining milk. Only mix with the knife until the mixture just comes together.
4. Sprinkle flour onto the work bench and turn out the scone dough. With floured hands knead quickly and lightly into a ball and flatten to about 3cm thickness.
5. Cut out with a scone cutter and place on prepared tray. Brush the tops of the scones very lightly with milk and bake for about 12 minutes or until golden.
6. Remove from the oven and wrap the scones in a tea towel to keep warm. Serve with butter.