

BALSAMIC STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

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This new and improved recipe includes non-conventional ingredients. I encourage you to try it exactly as it's written. You won't be sorry you did. But if you must, leave out the balsamic vinegar and basil leaves for my traditional recipe.

Sweet Biscuit Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 sticks of cold, unsalted butter cut into 1/2 inch cubes
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup buttermilk

Whipped Cream Ingredients:

- 3 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Strawberry Filling Ingredients:

- 2 pints strawberries, hulled and quartered lengthwise
- 1 1/2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 8 basil leaves

Balsamic Drizzle Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup sugar

Optional Ingredients:

- Powdered Sugar
- Vanilla Ice Cream



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl sift together the flour, granulated sugar, baking powder and salt. Scatter the butter over the flour mixture. Using the tips of your fingers, rub together the flour and butter until the mixture is crumbly. Place the flour mixture into the refrigerator for 20 - 30 minutes.

To prepare the strawberry filling, combine the strawberries, granulated sugar and balsamic vinegar and toss gently to coat evenly. Let stand for a minimum of 30 minutes until the berries release some juices. The strawberries can be prepared ahead of time and kept in the refrigerator.

Remove the flour and butter mixture from the refrigerator and using a fork, beat in the eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. The mixture will come together in a ball. In a

small bowl, mix together the cream and buttermilk. Gradually add in the cream mixture until a stiff, moist dough forms. Do not overbeat.

Using an ice cream scoop or 1/2 cup dry measuring cup, portion the dough for each shortcake onto a baking sheet sprayed with non-stick cooking spray or lined with parchment paper or a silpat. Space the shortcakes 1 inch apart, to make 12 shortcakes total. For a brown crusty top, brush the tops with cream, and sprinkle lightly with granulated sugar.

Bake until the shortcakes are lightly browned, 20 to 25 minutes. Place the baking sheet onto a wire rack and let cook for 5 minutes. Transfer the shortcakes to the wire rack and let cool completely.

To make the whipped cream filling, in a chilled large bowl, whip the cream on medium-high speed until soft peaks form. Add the powdered sugar and vanilla and whip until the cream holds firm peaks. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

For the balsamic drizzle, in a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the vinegar and granulated sugar and bring to a simmer. Cook until the mixture has reduced by nearly half and the glaze is syrupy, about 8 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly. (If the glaze thickens too much dilute it with warm water until it is the consistency of chocolate syrup.)

For each serving, slice a shortcake in half horizontally and place the bottom, cut side up, on a dessert plate. Top with some strawberries and then with some whipped cream. You may want to add a small scoop of vanilla ice cream between the strawberries and the whipped cream (*optional*).

Using a spoon, streak the berries and cream with a fine drizzle of the balsamic glaze. Sprinkle with freshly chiffonade basil. To chiffonade the basil, stack the basil leaves in a neat pile so they are curling upward. This makes them easier to roll. Roll the basil leaves tightly like a cigar. Using a sharp knife, slice the leaves into thin, evenly sized strips. Cap with the top half of the shortcake. Using a fine mesh sieve, dust with powdered sugar and serve immediately.