

Insanely Easy Cherry Streusel Pastry Cake

Photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi who writes [The Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

Note from Coffeehouse Mystery reader Shirley Jackson: “Dear Cleo: I made this cake for the first time in Houston for a group of Red Hat friends. This cake tastes just like a yeast bread that has taken you a long time to make. Sure does make your kitchen smell cozy.”

Note from Cleo Coyle: Shirley is absolutely right about the yeast and the coziness of this cake, which is why I call it a pastry cake. Over the years, I've seen many cake recipes with a cake mix as a starter. I've seen “pie-filling-over-cake-mix” recipes, too. But I've never seen yeast used as an ingredient. The use of yeast in this recipe gives the streusel cake a sweet, bread-like flavor and texture, but without kneading or rising time. This cake is great with coffee, making it a delicious breakfast treat, afternoon snack, or after-dinner dessert. May you bake it with love and eat with joy! ~ Cleo

Ingredients:

For the dough base

- 1 package yellow cake mix
- 1 packet (1/4 ounce) dry yeast
- 1 cup all-purpose flour, unsifted
- 2 large eggs, whisked with fork
- 2/3 cup very warm tap water

For the cake topping

- 5 Tablespoons butter (*salted is fine*)
- 1 can (1 pound 5 ounce) cherry pie filling
- 2 Tablespoons granulated sugar

Step 1 – Preheat oven, prep pan: Preheat oven to 375° F. Coat a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan with cooking spray (or grease and dust with flour).

Step 2 - Make dough: Into a large mixing bowl, measure out 1-1/2 cups of the dry cake mix. (Set aside the remaining mix to make the streusel topping.) Into the bowl, add flour, dry yeast, and 2/3rds cup of the very warm tap water. Allow yeast to bubble and come alive for a minute. Then add the eggs and beat 2 minutes at medium speed, scraping the bowl often. Dough will be thick. Using a rubber spatula or back of a spoon, spread it across the bottom of your coated baking pan.



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Step 3 - Make streusel topping: Melt butter in a saucepan and pour it over the remaining cake mix, which you set aside in Step 1. Mix butter in well with the dry mix. The streusel topping should be lumpy and crumbly.

Step 4 - Assemble coffee cake: Spoon the cherry pie filling evenly across the top of the dough in the baking pan. Sprinkle the sugar on top of the filling. Finally, using your fingers, crumble the streusel topping over it all, but...

NOTE: Because there is quite a bit of streusel topping in this recipe, I decided to hold back some of mine so the redness of the cherries would show through for a prettier presentation.

Step 5 - Bake and glaze: Bake the cake for 30 minutes in the preheated (375° F) oven. As it cools on a rack, make my glaze (below) and drizzle to finish before serving.



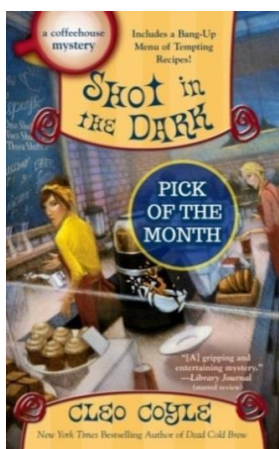
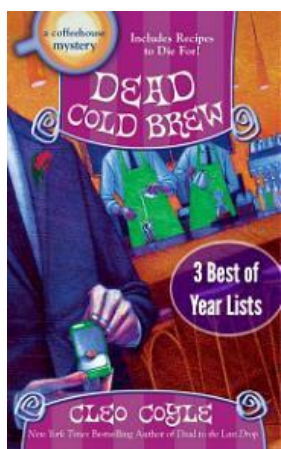
Cleo's Quick Sweet Glaze

Ingredients:

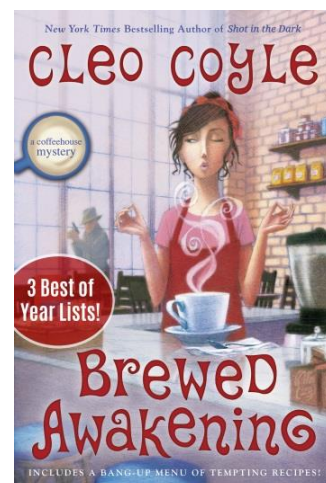
- 2 Tablespoons butter (salted is fine)
- 2 Tablespoons whole milk (cream or half-and-half)
- 1 cup confectioner's (powdered or icing) sugar, sifted

Over medium heat, warm butter and milk in a saucepan. Do not let this mixture brown, burn, or boil or you will have a scalded taste in your glaze. As soon as butter has melted, whisk in the sifted confectioner's sugar, a little at a time, until it is completely melted and the glaze is smooth. You must work with the glaze quickly, while still warm. Drizzle the warm glaze over the cake using a rubber spatula, the tines of a fork, or a spoon. If the glaze hardens up, place the saucepan over the heat again and whisk well until liquefied and smooth once more.

Eat with joy! ~ Cleo



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