

Cleo Coyle's Little Pumpkin Cake (Dairy-Free)

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

This is a great little snack cake to serve at this time of year. It's insanely easy to stir together, bakes up moist and delicious, and the pumpkin on the ingredient list adds nutrition and fiber. You can make it small (like I do) in an 8-inch square pan or you can double it for a festive 9 x 13-inch sheet cake. This cake recipe uses no dairy. To finish the recipe in a dairy-free fashion, you can dust it with powdered sugar, or use Dairy-Free Whipped Cream (aka whipped coconut milk; [click here](#) for that recipe). On the other hand, my husband Marc (who is also my partner in crime-writing), absolutely loves Cream Cheese Frosting on his pumpkin and spice cakes. So do I, and I'm happy to share that, too. Either way, may you eat with joy! ~ Cleo

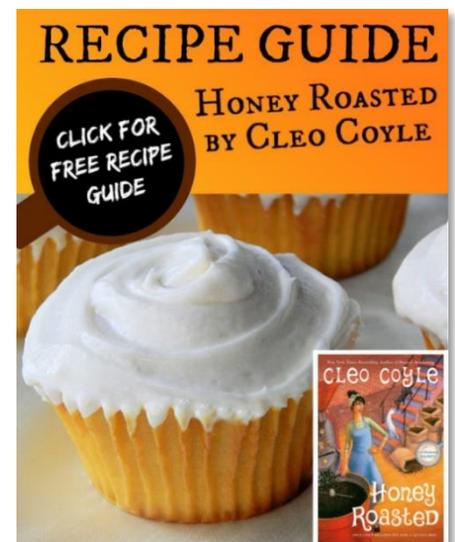
Servings: I use an 8-inch square pan and cut the cake into 16 petite servings. For larger servings, cut the cake into 9 squares. For a 9 x 13-inch sheet cake, double the recipe for both the cake (and the frosting) and you're all set.

Dry Ingredients:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup light brown sugar, packed
- ½ cup granulated white sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice (*see my end note to make your own)
- ¼ teaspoon table salt (or ½ teaspoon Kosher salt)

Wet Ingredients:

- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup vegetable, canola, or coconut oil
- 1 cup cooked and pureed pumpkin (If using canned, be sure to use 100% pumpkin and not pumpkin pie filling.)



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Step 1—Prep-oven and pan: First preheat the oven to 325° F. Make a parchment paper sling for your pan by allowing paper to hang over two edges. With non-stick cooking spray, lightly coat the paper as well as the pan sides without paper. Now mix up your batter.



Step 2—One bowl mixing method: Measure dry ingredients into a large bowl. Whisk them together. Make a well in the center. Break your two large eggs into the well, whisk to blend. Add oil and blend again. Add pumpkin puree. Switch to a large spoon or rubber spatula. Gently stir and fold until the dry mixture is completely blended into a smooth batter—but be careful not to over-mix the batter or you will develop the gluten in the flour and your cake will be tough instead of tender.



Step 3—Bake: Pour the batter into your prepared pan and bang the filled pan on a flat surface to release any bubbles and even out the batter. Bake in a well preheated 325° F. oven for approximately 35 to 45 minutes. The time will depend on your oven. The cake is done when the center is no longer jiggling and springs back when lightly touched. To be absolutely sure, stick a toothpick into the center of the cake. If it comes out clean (with no batter clinging to it), the cake is done. Remove from oven and allow to cool for a few minutes, then run a butter knife along the sides of the pan that are not papered (to loosen if sticking). Gently lift the cake out of the pan and onto a cooling rack. When completely cool, dust with powdered sugar OR try one of my frosting options on the next page...



***MAKE YOUR OWN PUMPKIN PIE SPICE:**

To make 1 teaspoon of Pumpkin Pie Spice, mix together: 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon + 1/4 teaspoon ginger + 1/8 teaspoon allspice or cloves + 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg.



Dairy-Free Frosting

My pumpkin cake recipe is dairy-free. If you'd like a dairy-free option for the frosting, try using "Dairy-Free Whipped Cream," a wonderful option for creating delicious whipped cream. It's incredibly easy to make using a single can of full-fat coconut milk. To get that recipe, [click here](#) and jump to the post, where you can download a printable PDF of the recipe.

OR (If dairy is not a problem for you, try...)

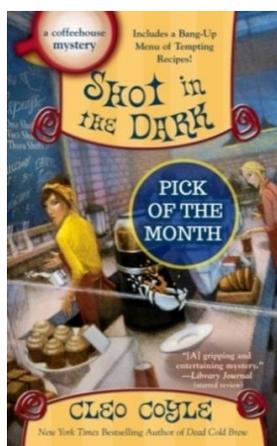
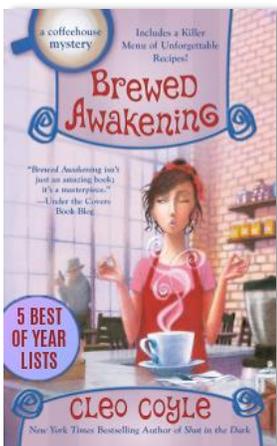
Cream Cheese Frosting

Servings: Covers an 8-inch square cake (for 9x13 sheet cake, double this recipe)

Ingredients:

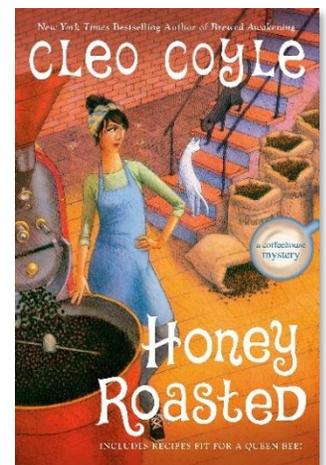
- 4 ounces cream cheese (half of a typical 8-ounce block)
- 2 teaspoons whole milk
- ½ to 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract (to your taste)
- 2-1/4 cups confectioners' (powdered aka icing) sugar

Directions: Place cream cheese into a large bowl. Using an electric mixer, beat until creamy. Add milk & vanilla and beat again until blended. Add about half of the confectioners' (aka powdered) sugar and beat until fully incorporated. Add the remaining sugar to finish. If you find the frosting too loose, add more confectioners' sugar. If you find it too dry, add a tiny bit more milk. Frost the cake. I use a tablespoon to dollop the frosting onto the cake, then I use the back of the spoon to smooth and swirl the frosting.



Eat with joy! ~ Cleo

The [Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes. To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle's online coffeehouse at www.CoffeehouseMystery.com And her recipe blog at www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com



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