

Almond Sponge Cake from **The Nordic Cookbook by Magnus Nilsson** (available at Ingebretsens)
Mandelkage (Denmark) *Mandelkaka* (Sweden)



I was asked to select a recipe from the The Nordic Cookbook (Fäviken Chef Magnus Nilsson's comprehensive & essential cookbook for authentic Nordic recipes) for sharing on our website. At first I chose Boiled Seal Intestines with Blubber, Crowberries and Roseroot Leaves. Our webmaster said "No", the Ingebretsen's Meat Market butchers said "No", heck, everybody said "No". So - here's a less adventurous, nevertheless delicious favorite...

This is a recipe for a very delicious, very dense and very fantastic almond sponge cake. I usually just refer to it as "the cake". Eat a slice with your afternoon coffee or at any other time of the day. I like to have quite a bit of acidity in it as it easily becomes too sweet. Sometimes I use lemon and sometimes I use Ättika (12%) vinegar (The Nordic Cookbook, page 656). I usually don't add zest to this as I prefer the taste of almond without it, but feel free to add some if you like. And yes, I know, the recipe looks a bit insane but it should really be like this. It will almost fill the Loaf (or Almond Cake) Pan, but it won't rise as much as ordinary cake... - Jerry A. (baker & staff member)

Preparation and cooking time: 1½ hours, plus cooling time.

7 oz/200g (1¾ sticks) butter, soft, plus extra to grease & breadcrumbs, to coat
6 oz/170g (¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons) sugar
7 oz/200g almond paste, grated on the coarse side of a box grater
2 tablespoons Ättika (12%) vinegar (The Nordic Cookbook, page 656) or lemon juice
5 eggs
4½ oz/130g (1 cup plus 1 tablespoon) weak (soft) wheat flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
a good pinch salt

Preheat the oven to 300°F/150°C/Gas Mark 2

Butter a 9 x 5 x 3 inch/23 x 13 x 8 cm loaf pan and coat with breadcrumbs.

Or use the traditional Almond Cake Pan (available at Ingebretsens).

Place the butter, sugar, almond paste and vinegar or lemon juice in the bowl of a stand mixer. Mix until smooth and a little lighter in colour – the mix should be really stiff. Add the eggs one at a time and mix until fully incorporated. Sift the flour, baking powder and salt into the bowl. Work a bit more in the stand mixer. The flour should be mixed in well and the batter should be smooth, but do not overwork it. Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan and bake in the oven for 1 hour.

When it is done, place the cake upside down onto a wire rack to cool. This is a very important step. By inverting the cake, the fat from the butter and almonds will be given the possibility to spread evenly in it. If you leave it as it was baked to cool it will be very greasy at the bottom and too dry at the top. After a few minutes remove the pan and let the cake cool to room temperature still upside down, before cutting into it.