

Jo Pratt's Courgette, Pistachio and Orange Loaf Cake

Makes 1 loaf

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 50 minutes

Ingredients:

- 125ml/4fl oz/½ cup olive oil, plus extra for greasing
- 2 eggs
- 100g/3½oz/½ cup soft brown sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 350g/12oz/4 cups coarsely grated courgette/zucchini
- finely grated zest of 1 orange
- 300g/10½oz/2¼ cups wholegrain spelt or wholemeal/whole-wheat flour
- 75g/2½oz/½ cup shelled pistachio nuts, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

For the orange glaze (optional):

- 60g/2¼oz/½ cup icing/confectioners' sugar, sifted
- juice and zest of about ½ orange
- 1 tbsp roughly chopped pistachio nuts

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4. Oil a 1kg/2lb 4oz loaf pan and line the base with baking parchment. Lightly beat together the eggs, olive oil, sugar and vanilla extract. Stir in the grated courgette/zucchini and orange zest. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, pistachio nuts, baking powder and cinnamon. Pour in the egg mixture and mix everything together well.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a spoon. Bake for 45–50 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean when inserted in the middle of the loaf. If the cake starts to brown too much, cover the top with foil. Leave to cool in the pan for 10 minutes before turning out onto a wire/cooling rack to cool completely.

To make the orange glaze, if using, put the icing/confectioners' sugar in a bowl with the orange zest and gradually mix in enough orange juice to form a runny icing. Pour over the cake, allowing it to drip down the sides, then scatter over the pistachios.

The cake will keep in an airtight container for up to one week.

