

Grandpa Alfred's Shortcake

By Anna Von Reitz



I wish I had the ability to just invite all of you to my birthday party, but I can't. So, I am doing the best I can by sharing my Grandfather's Shortcake Recipe, circa 1906. Back then, cakes were much simpler, just a few basic ingredients, and--- as you will directly experience if you make this antique shortcake, they had a distinctive taste and texture all their own.

This particular cake has been a durable family favorite for over a hundred years. It has presided over summertime luncheons, teatimes, and barbeques--- and held center stage at many of my own birthday parties-- including this year's event. I sincerely hope you will help keep the recipe alive for a new generation of Americans. There is something about its tender crumb and buttery vanilla taste that pairs perfectly with juicy summer strawberries, raspberries, and even rhubarb sauce, which was my Grandmother's favorite.

Grandpa Alfred's Shortcake

1 cup sugar

1/4 cup butter, softened

2 eggs

1 cup milk

2 cups flour mixed with 3 teaspoons baking powder

pinch of salt

Cream together the sugar and butter, add the eggs, then the milk alternating with the flour and baking powder mixture and throw in your pinch of salt. Bake for about 40 minutes at 350 degrees. Test with a wooden toothpick; it should be very, very lightly browned.

This is not a box cake. It tastes and feels nothing like a box cake. Instead, there is something about the simple goodness of it that sticks in your memory and grows a place in your heart.

Tomorrow is my 65th birthday and the 77th Anniversary of D-Day. Even if you can't be here to remember and celebrate, please try out this shortcake recipe sometime this summer while all the fruits and berries are in season.

Enjoy the thought of a good man baking this same shortcake in a wood-fired cast-iron stove more than a century ago, much to the surprise and delight of his wife and children. And his as-yet-undreamed of Grand-daughter, too.