

# Raspberry Hazelnut Meringue Cake

The combination of hazelnut and raspberry is quite a magical marriage of flavours. This raspberry hazelnut meringue cake is made up of two discs of hazelnut meringue sandwiched together with cream folded through with raspberry coulis and whole raspberries. You need to be a bit generous with the raspberries to make this cake something special and to get the level of tartness needed to balance the sweetness of the meringue and the earthy nut flavour. The resulting contrast is delicious. I hope you enjoy it.

- 6 egg whites
- 1 1/2 cups caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 1 1/2 cups hazelnuts
- 600ml thickened cream
- 6 punnets raspberries

To make raspberry coulis: blend 2 punnets of raspberries in a blender until smooth and then pass the puree through a sieve to remove the seeds. Set aside until ready to assemble the cake.

Line two 23 cm cake pans with baking paper or draw two 23 cm diameter circles on sheets of baking paper, flip the paper so the pen marks are underneath and place the sheets on two baking trays.

Roast the hazelnuts in a 180°C oven for approximately 5 minutes. Remove the skins by rubbing the nuts in a clean tea towel. Grind the nuts using a barrel rotary food grinder or use a food processor with a tablespoon of the sugar until finely chopped but not a paste. You want the ground nuts to be light and fluffy with some coarser pieces throughout.

Reduce the heat of the oven to 160°C

Using an electric beater, beat the egg whites until foaming. Gradually add the sugar while continuing to beat the egg whites and beat until a thick glossy meringue is formed. Add vinegar and essence and mix through. Fold in the ground nuts. Divide the meringue over the two pans or within the circles drawn on the baking paper. Smooth the top of the meringue and bake for 20 minutes and then turn down the heat to 150°C and bake for a further 20 minutes. Cool the meringues on a wire rack.

Beat the cream until thick and then beat in the coulis. To assemble the cake spread half the raspberry cream on one disk and scatter with the half the whole raspberries. Place the second meringue on top and then spread or pipe the raspberry cream over the top and scatter with whole raspberries. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.