

## Bright and Zesty Key Lime Cake for Citrus Lovers

If you're a fan of citrus desserts that strike the perfect balance between



**OVEN**  
**350°F**

**TIME**  
**30 min**

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### INGREDIENTS

For the Cake:

2 ½ cups all-purpose flour

2 ½ tsp baking powder

¾ tsp salt

1 cup unsalted butter, softened

2 cups granulated sugar

4 large eggs

1 tbsp key lime zest

¾ cup key lime juice (freshly squeezed)

1 ½ tsp vanilla extract

1 cup buttermilk

Green food coloring (optional)

For the Frosting:

8 oz cream cheese, softened

¾ cup unsalted butter, softened

4 cups powdered sugar

2 tbsp key lime juice

1 tsp vanilla extract

Ingredient Notes & Swaps:

**Key limes vs regular limes:** Key limes are more aromatic and tangier. You can use Persian limes, but adjust the zest and juice to taste.

**Buttermilk:** If you don't have buttermilk, substitute with 1 cup milk + 1 tbsp vinegar or lemon juice.

**Coloring:** A few drops of green food coloring give a visual nod to key lime flavor, but the cake is just as delicious without it.

Zest tip: Zest the limes before juicing-it's way easier that way!

Step-by-Step Directions:

? Make the Cake:

? Make the Frosting:

? Assemble the Cake:

Tips for Success:

Use room temp ingredients for a smoother batter and frosting.

Don't overmix once you add the flour-just enough to combine.

Chill the cake before slicing for cleaner cuts and firmer frosting.

Zest first! You'll thank yourself later.

Serving Suggestions & Pairings:

A tall glass of iced blueberry lemonade

A scoop of vanilla or coconut ice cream

## DIRECTIONS

1. ? Make the Cake:: 1 Prep pans: Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease and flour two 9-inch round cake pans.2 Dry mix: In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt.3 Cream base: In a separate large bowl, beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well.4 Add lime goodness: Stir in the key lime zest, juice, and vanilla.5 Alternate additions: Add dry ingredients and buttermilk alternately, beginning and ending with dry. Mix until just combined. Add food coloring if using.6 Bake: Divide batter evenly between pans and bake for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Let cool completely.
2. ? Make the Frosting:: 7 Whip base: Beat cream cheese and butter until smooth and fluffy.8 Flavor: Add key lime juice, zest, and vanilla extract.9 Sweeten: Gradually beat in powdered sugar until thick, creamy, and spreadable.
3. ? Assemble the Cake:: ? Place one cake layer on a plate or stand. Spread frosting on top. Add the second layer and frost the top and sides. Garnish with extra zest or lime slices.
4. Tips for Success: Use room temp ingredients for a smoother batter and frosting.
5. Don't overmix once you add the flour-just enough to combine.
6. Chill the cake before slicing for cleaner cuts and firmer frosting.
7. Zest first! You'll thank yourself later.
8. Serving Suggestions & Pairings: This cake pairs beautifully with:
9. A tall glass of iced blueberry lemonade

10. A scoop of vanilla or coconut ice cream
11. A festive dessert platter featuring rainbow sprinkle cookies or grasshopper pie
12. Storage & Leftovers: Refrigerator: Store covered in the fridge for up to 4 days.
13. Freezer: Freeze unfrosted cake layers wrapped tightly for up to 2 months. Thaw and frost when ready.
14. Frosting: Can be made up to 3 days in advance and stored in the fridge.
15. More Recipes You'll Love: If you love citrus and color-forward sweets, try:
16. Rainbow : Sprinkle Cookies - fun, festive, and fast.
17. Grasshopper : Pie - mint-chocolate no-bake magic.
18. Edible : Cookie Dough - no oven, all satisfaction.
19. The : Easter Cookies Everyone Will Be Talking About - whimsical and kid-friendly.
20. Final Thoughts: This Key Lime Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting is pure citrus joy in layer cake form. Whether it's for a birthday, brunch, or just a "you deserve cake" day, the fresh lime flavor and creamy finish make it unforgettable.
21. Give it a try, share your slice on social, and tag @ChefManiac-we love seeing your creations!

## SWAPS & NOTES

& Swaps Key limes vs regular limes : Key limes are more aromatic and tangier.

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## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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**More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)**

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/bright-and-zesty-key-lime-cake-for-citrus-lovers/>