

## Ms. Johnny Ruth Pound Cake: A Classic Southern Recipe

Here's what you'll need to bake this quintessential pound cake:



**OVEN**  
**325°F**

**TIME**  
**7 min**

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### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup shortening (like Crisco)
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 5 large eggs, room temperature
- 3 cups all-purpose flour (sifted)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt
- 1 cup whole milk, room temperature
- 1 Tbsp pure vanilla extract
- Optional:  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp lemon or almond extract for added depth
- 1 cup powdered sugar (confectioners' sugar)
- 2-3 Tbsp milk or lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp vanilla extract

#### Swaps and Notes:

**Butter & Shortening:** The combination is key for texture. Do not substitute one for the other entirely. Ensure they are both truly softened to room temperature for proper creaming.

**Sugar:** Granulated sugar is classic for pound cake, contributing to its dense, moist crumb.

**Eggs:** Using large eggs at room temperature is important for proper emulsification and a smooth batter.

**Flour:** Sifting the flour helps prevent lumps and creates a lighter crumb. All-purpose flour is standard.

**Baking Powder/Salt:** These provide just enough lift without making the cake too airy, maintaining the traditional dense pound cake texture.

**Milk:** Whole milk at room temperature is recommended for richness and proper mixing.

**Extracts:** Pure vanilla extract is a must. The optional lemon or almond extract can add a delightful subtle complexity that truly elevates the flavor.

**Glaze Liquid:** Milk for a pure vanilla glaze, or lemon juice for a brighter, zesty glaze.

## DIRECTIONS

- 1. Baking :** Ms. Johnny Ruth's Pound Cake is a classic process that yields perfect results.
- 2. Preheat : Oven & Prep Pan:** Preheat your oven to 325°F (163°C). Generously grease and flour a 10-12 cup tube pan or Bundt pan. Ensure every crevice is coated to prevent sticking.
- 3. Cream : Fats & Sugar:** In a very large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, cream together the softened unsalted butter, shortening, and granulated sugar. Beat on medium-high speed for about 5-7 minutes, or until the mixture is very light, fluffy, and pale in color. This creaming step incorporates air and is crucial for the cake's texture.
- 4. Add : Eggs Gradually:** Add the large eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition until fully incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed to ensure everything is mixed.
- 5. Prepare : Dry Ingredients:** In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the sifted all-purpose flour, baking powder, and salt. This ensures the leavening and seasoning are evenly distributed.
- 6. Alternate : Dry and Wet:** With the mixer on low speed, alternately add the dry ingredients and the room temperature whole milk to the wet ingredients, beginning and ending with the flour mixture. Mix just until combined after each addition. Do not overmix; overmixing develops gluten and can lead to a tough cake.
- 7. Stir in : Extracts:** Once the batter is just combined, stir in the pure vanilla extract (and optional lemon or almond extract if you're using them) until evenly distributed.

8. **Fill : Pan & Bake:** Pour the smooth batter evenly into the prepared tube or Bundt pan. Use a spatula to smooth the top.
9. **Bake:** Bake for 1 hour 15 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. The top should be golden brown and spring back when lightly touched.
10. **Cooling:** Once baked, remove the pan from the oven and let the cake cool in the pan for 10-15 minutes. This allows the cake to set and firm up slightly before you attempt to remove it. Then, carefully invert the cake onto a wire rack to cool completely. It must be completely cool before glazing or slicing for the best texture.
11. **Optional : Glaze (Southern Touch):**
12. **Mix : Glaze:** In a small bowl, whisk together the 1 cup powdered sugar, 2-3 Tbsp milk or lemon juice, and 1/2 tsp vanilla extract until smooth and free of lumps. Adjust the amount of liquid to achieve your desired drizzling consistency.
13. **Drizzle:** Once the pound cake has cooled completely, drizzle the glaze evenly over the top, allowing it to drip down the sides.

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