

The Malka Family Traditional Honey Cake

A Light, Airy, and Fluffy Honey Sponge Cake for the High Holidays

The Story Behind the Recipe

This cake is almost always connected to the High Holidays in our home—we prepare it for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, for both the pre-fast meal and to break the fast. Our grown children and their partners love this cake, making it one of the signature tastes of the holiday season.

In our household, Itzik is in charge of baking the cake. The recipe is adapted, with a few personal tweaks, from the honey sponge cake in Nira Shoyer's cookbook *"Cakes for All Occasions"* (p. 112).

In the past, when my late parents-in-law were alive, our family would gather on Rosh Hashanah eve at their home in Ofakim, with each family bringing different dishes. Among our contributions, we always brought this honey cake. My sister-in-law Pnina would also prepare a honey cake using a different recipe from the same book. At the end of the meal, we would serve both cakes alongside fresh mint tea, and a friendly debate would always unfold: ours was lighter in color and moister, while my sister-in-law's was darker and drier. The children naturally preferred their own mother's/father's cake, while my late mother-in-law would taste both and lovingly declare them both excellent.

Measuring Cup: Standard 240 ml (1 cup)

Baking Pan: 26 cm (10-inch) round or decorative bundt pan

Baking Temp: 170°C / 340°F (Medium heat)

Baking Time: 35–45 minutes

Ingredients & Preparation

Part 1: Whipping the Egg Whites

- 5 Egg whites
- **3/4 cup** Brown sugar

Instructions: Whip the egg whites in a large bowl. As foam begins to form, gradually add the brown sugar in 3–4 additions. Continue whipping until a stable yet flexible meringue forms.

Part 2: The Wet Mixture

- **5** Egg yolks
- **3/4 cup** Honey
- **1/2 cup** Vegetable oil
- **1 level tsp** Ground cinnamon
- **Pinch** of Salt

Instructions: In a separate bowl, whisk all ingredients thoroughly until smooth and uniform. Gently fold this mixture into the whipped egg whites.

Part 3: Dry Ingredients

- **1.5 cups** All-purpose flour
- **1 heaping tsp** Baking powder

Instructions: Mix the flour and baking powder together. Add to the bowl in 2–3 additions, folding gently after each addition until the flour is completely incorporated.

Baking Instructions

1. Preheat oven to **170°C (340°F)**.
2. Pour the batter into a greased baking pan.
3. Bake for **35–45 minutes**. The cake is ready when it is golden-brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out almost clean but moist.
4. Allow the cake to cool for about 15 minutes before unmolding.



Pro Tips & Variations

- **Retaining Moisture:** Honey darkens and browning speeds up quickly in the oven. Check the cake with a toothpick starting at 35–40 minutes. It is crucial to remove it when the toothpick is slightly moist to prevent drying.
- **Gentle Folding:** When adding the wet mixture and flour to the whipped whites, use broad, gentle folding motions from the center outwards to maintain the airiness of the meringue.

- **Nut Variation:** Adding **1/2 cup finely ground walnuts/pecans** to the flour mixture before folding enhances both texture and flavor.