- Prep Time: 20 minutes
- Bake Time: 50-60 minutes
- Cooling & Glazing Time: 30 minutes
- Total Time: 1 hour 50 minutes
- Servings: 8-10 slices
- Difficulty: Easy

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Ingredients

For the Cake:

- 1 ¾ cups (220g) all-purpose flour

- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (200g) granulated sugar
- Zest of 2 large oranges
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- ½ cup (120ml) whole milk, at room temperature
- ½ cup (120ml) freshly squeezed orange juice
- ½ cup (113g) unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

For the Orange Syrup:

- ¼ cup (60ml) freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

For the Orange Glaze:

- 1 cup (120g) powdered sugar
- 1-2 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 teaspoon orange zest (optional, for extra color)

Instructions

Step 1: Prepare for Baking
Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a 9×5-inch (23x13cm) loaf pan and line it with parchment paper, leaving some overhang on the sides for easy removal. Set aside.

Step 2: Create the Citrus Sugar
In a large bowl, combine the granulated sugar and the zest of two oranges. Use your fingertips to rub the zest into the sugar until it becomes fragrant and has the texture of wet sand. This simple step releases the essential oils from the zest, which is the key to a deeply flavorful cake.

Step 3: Whisk Dry Ingredients
To the bowl with the citrus sugar, add the all-purpose flour, baking powder, and salt. Whisk everything together until well combined.

Step 4: Combine Wet Ingredients
In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, orange juice, melted butter, and vanilla extract until smooth.

Step 5: Bring the Batter Together
Pour the wet ingredients into the bowl of dry ingredients. Gently fold the mixture together with a spatula until just combined. Be careful not to overmix; a few small lumps are perfectly fine. Overmixing will result in a dense, tough cake.

Step 6: Bake the Cake
Pour the batter into your prepared loaf pan and smooth the top with your spatula. Bake for 50-60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. The top should be a beautiful golden brown.

Step 7: Make the Orange Syrup
While the cake is baking, prepare the syrup. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the ¼ cup of orange juice and 2 tablespoons of sugar. Stir until the sugar has completely dissolved, then remove from heat. Set aside.

Step 8: Apply the Syrup
Once the cake is out of the oven, let it cool in the pan for 10 minutes. Then, use a skewer or a thin knife to poke holes all over the top of the warm cake. Slowly and evenly pour the orange syrup over the cake, allowing it to soak in. This step guarantees an incredibly moist crumb.

Step 9: Cool and Glaze
Let the cake cool completely in the pan for another 15-20 minutes before carefully lifting it out using the parchment paper overhang. Transfer it to a wire rack to cool completely. Once the cake is cool, prepare the glaze. In a small bowl, whisk together the powdered sugar, 1 tablespoon of orange juice, and the optional zest. Add more juice, a teaspoon at a time, until you reach a thick but pourable consistency. Drizzle the glaze over the cooled cake.

Step 10: Serve and Enjoy!
Allow the glaze to set for a few minutes before slicing. Serve this delightful cake with a hot cup of tea or coffee.

Recipe Notes & Tips

- Room Temperature Ingredients: Ensure your eggs and milk are at room temperature. This helps them emulsify properly with the butter, creating a smoother batter and a lighter cake.

- Fresh is Best: Please use freshly squeezed orange juice and fresh zest. Bottled juice simply doesn’t have the same vibrant flavor.

- Don’t Overmix: The most common mistake in loaf cakes is overmixing. Stop as soon as the flour is incorporated.

- Storage: Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days, or in the refrigerator for up to a week.

- Freezing: This cake freezes beautifully. Wrap the unglazed cake tightly in plastic wrap and then in aluminum foil. Freeze for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator and add the glaze before serving.

Nutritional Information (Estimated)

Disclaimer: The following nutritional information is an estimate and is provided for informational purposes only. It should not be considered a substitute for professional dietary advice.

Per Serving (Based on 10 slices):

- Calories: ~310 kcal
- Total Fat: 11g
- Saturated Fat: 6g
- Cholesterol: 65mg
- Sodium: 150mg
- Total Carbohydrates: 48g
- Dietary Fiber: 0.5g
- Total Sugars: 31g
- Protein: 4g