

# Golden bundt cake

*When we were photographing this cake, I sent some home with my publisher, whose daughter declared, 'It doesn't taste like a vegetable cake?', which I would agree with – because most of the time, people who put vegetables in a cake do it surreptitiously, trying to 'sneak in a serve'. Here, patty pan squash – or zucchini (courgette) if you'd prefer – is celebrated with reckless abandon, to the point that you can still see flecks of yellow and green through the moist, velvety sponge. I can't tell you how satisfying it is to eat, and still more satisfying to serve. You'll be fielding questions about it all afternoon. Stay gold, Ponybundt.*

## Serving Size

Serves 8

## WHAT YOU NEED

20 g ( $\frac{3}{4}$  oz) unsalted butter, melted

2 cups (250 g) coarsely grated patty pan (baby yellow) squash or zucchini (courgette) (see tip)

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup (110 g) caster (superfine) sugar

finely grated zest of 1 lemon, plus  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (80 ml) lemon juice

1 tablespoon finely chopped lemon thyme leaves (or regular thyme leaves, if you must)

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup (180 ml) light extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing

3 eggs

1 cup (250 ml) buttermilk

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup (170 g) brown sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup (45 g) desiccated coconut

$2\frac{1}{2}$  cups (375 g) self-raising flour

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt flakes

$1\frac{1}{2}$  cups (175 g) icing (confectioners') sugar

## Dehydrated squash flowers

2 patty pan (baby yellow) squash, thinly sliced using a mandoline or sharp knife

### ***WHAT TO DO***

Preheat the oven to 160°C (315°F). Grease a 25 cm (10 inch) fluted ring (bundt) tin with the melted butter, then transfer to the fridge to chill and set.

Place the grated squash, caster sugar, lemon zest and lemon thyme leaves in a bowl and mix to combine. Stand for 10 minutes to macerate.

Add the oil, eggs, buttermilk and brown sugar to the bowl, mixing well. Add the coconut, then sift in the flour and salt. Use a wooden spoon to combine, without overmixing.

Transfer to your cake tin and bake on the middle rack of the oven for 1 hour, or until a skewer inserted in the cake comes out clean. Leave to cool in the cake tin on top of a wire rack for 10 minutes, then invert the cake onto the wire rack to cool completely.

If making the dehydrated squash flowers, flick the oven on to 100°C (200°F). Place the squash slices on a wire rack so that the slices will droop over. Pop into the oven for 20 minutes, or until dried into frilly 'flowers'.

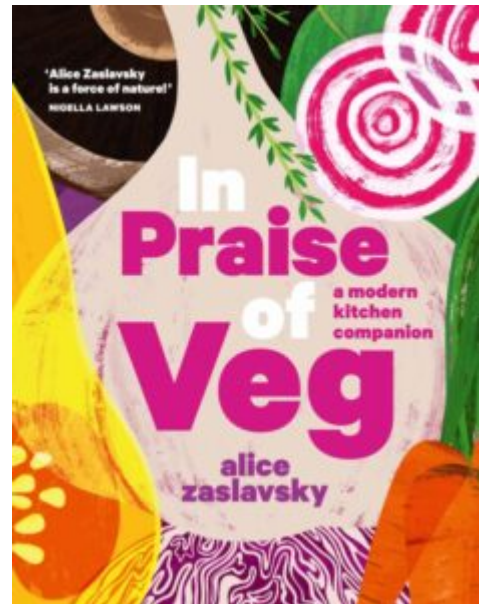
Meanwhile, get the icing going. Place the icing sugar in a bowl, add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) of the lemon juice and mix to combine. Add more lemon juice, a teaspoon at a time, to achieve a smooth, spoonable icing consistency.

Spoon the icing over the cooled cake, then garnish with the squash flowers. This cake keeps extremely well, covered loosely with beeswax wrap or foil and stored on the bottom shelf of your fridge. Not that you'll have much left, mind

you.

**Tip** If you're using zucchini (courgette) but still want to keep the paler sponge, just peel off the skin, or leave it on for maximum veg cake realness.

**Shortcut** The icing is optional, as are the dehydrated 'flowers'. Try dusting the cake with icing sugar instead, decorating with fresh lemon thyme leaves, and/or serving with



a dollop of plain yoghurt. **SAVE PRINT**

'Images and text from In Praise of Veg by Alice Zaslavsky, photography by Ben Dearnley. Murdoch Books RRP \$59.99'.