



## Sophie Grigson's Coconut and Strawberry Cake Recipe

This is a favourite summer recipe in our family, though of course, there's no reason why you shouldn't make it in the middle of winter, replacing the strawberries with strawberry jam, or lemon curd.

175g (6 oz) self-raising flour  
pinch of salt  
115g (4 oz) unsalted butter, softened  
250g (9 oz) caster sugar  
3 free range eggs, separated  
160 ml (5 5/2 fl oz ) milk  
85g (3 oz) dessicated coconut  
pinch of cream of tartar

To fill:

150 ml whipping cream, lightly whipped  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
150g (5 oz) strawberries, halved  
icing sugar

Pre-heat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas Mark 4. Grease and flour two 20 cm (8") sandwich tins.

Sift the flour with the salt. Beat the butter for a few minutes until very soft then add 150g (5 oz) of the sugar. Cream together until very light and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks one at a time. Next beat in about a third of the flour followed by half the milk, repeat and then finish with the last of the flour. Fold in the coconut.

Whisk the egg whites and cream of tartar until they form soft peaks. Sprinkle over the remaining sugar and whisk again until the mixture is thick and glossy. Fold into the cake batter. Divide the batter between the two prepared tins and bake for around 30-35 minutes until just firm to the touch. Test by plunging a skewer into the centre – if it comes out clean then the cakes are done. Let them cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then turn out and finish cooling on a wire rack.

To make the filling, whip the cream lightly with a tablespoon of icing sugar and the vanilla extract until it just holds its shape. Hull and halve or quarter the strawberries depending on size. When the cakes are quite cool, spread the upper side of one thickly with cream, then cover with strawberries. Settle the second cake comfortably on top. Dust with a little icing sugar and keep the whole lot cool until tea-time.