

Kate Humbles' foolproof bake

Don't fancy yourself as much of a baker? This cake from Kate Humble will help change your mind. It is one of many foolproof recipes that appear in the nature presenter's first cookbook.

"I'm not a 'grown-up cook'," says the 53-year-old. "I don't have any kind of pretensions of being the next Nigella or anything like that – I don't have the figure for it, anyway."

While Kate, 53, might not have gone to culinary school, she's being as modest as her name suggests. In fact, her first cookbook – Home Cooked: Recipes From The Farm – was written after fans of Channel 5 show *Escape To The Farm With Kate Humble* practically demanded it.

"A self-confessed tentative cake-maker, when I attempted this recipe for the first time it turned out to be nigh-on perfect," adds Kate.

"Consequently, I love it and probably bake it more often than any other cake. There are many versions out there, but they all forego flour for ground almonds and use oranges, clementines or tangerines that are cooked until soft and then puréed.

"The result is a dense, fragrant sponge that is equally happy eaten unadorned, or with cream. Raspberries go well, either whole or as a coulis, but I love it with this simple orange salad and will offer crème fraîche with a shake of cinnamon for those who want it."



CLEMENTINE CAKE WITH AN ORANGE AND POMEGRANATE SALAD

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 8)

375g - or as near as possible - clementines or tangerines
Oil for greasing
6 eggs
225g golden caster sugar
250g ground almonds
1 heaped tsp baking powder
6 oranges
1tsp orange blossom water
2tbsp pomegranate seeds
2tbsp toasted flaked almonds
Some mint leaves, shredded

METHOD

1 For the cake: Boil the whole fruit (in their skins) in a pan of water for one to two hours until soft. Let them cool, cut in half and remove the pips. Purée the fruit halves - skins and all - in a food processor until smooth. Preheat your

oven to 190°C, Gas Mark 5, and grease and line a 20 centimetre springform tin.

2 Beat the eggs with a fork, then stir in the sugar, almonds and baking powder. Once well mixed, add the fruit purée and stir until the fruit is evenly distributed in the mix. Pour into the prepared tin and cook for one hour. Check with your trusty skewer that it is cooked through. If it gets a bit too brown before the end of the cooking time, loosely cover with foil. Let it cool in the tin on a rack.

3 For the salad: Peel the oranges, making sure you remove all the pith, then slice them into discs about five millimetres thick. Arrange them in a dish. Sprinkle over the orange blossom water and the pomegranate seeds. Before serving, add a scattering of toasted flaked almonds and shredded mint leaves.

● Home Cooked: Recipes From The Farm by Kate Humble is published by Gaia, priced £25.