

Give your lemons a good squeeze

Lemons are one of my favourite ingredients—for their contributions to my culinary adventures, but also for their good looks. A simple clear glass bowl or vase filled with lemons and a bit of greenery makes a beautiful, inexpensive and useful centerpiece!

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



Today's lemon poppyseed loaf is wonderful and I highly recommend it. There are a couple of ways you can finish it off. You can glaze it as per the recipe (and this is the most flavourful way to serve it). But, you can also dust it with icing sugar and garnish with fresh berries, as we've done for the photo today. This is a great dessert recipe, but also lovely for a brunch or tea.

When you are shopping for your lemons, you need to know that a good quality lemon should be heavy, fragrant and have a close-grained peel. As the lemon becomes very ripe, it gets less sour and more juicy. So choose the lemon that is softer when squeezed as opposed to the ones that are rock hard.

If you don't already own a rasp (or microplane), then rush out to your nearest kitchen supply store and buy yourself one. A good one will cost you about \$15. Now you will be able to easily grate the peel from all your lemons. If you aren't using it in the dish right away, then pop it into a baggie in the freezer, because it is so fragrant and adds an entirely different dimension to your recipe. It won't be as flavourful if it has been frozen, but it will be okay and you won't have wasted it. The reason that I tell you to rush out and buy the microplane first, is because it produces a finer, more delicate zest than if you were to use a grater. You can also use that microplane to grate fresh ginger, garlic, nutmeg, Parmesan cheese, chocolate and more— so it's well worth the investment!

Have you ever made a sauce or soup and thought— hmm, there's something missing? Well, before you reach for the salt shaker, try adding some fresh lemon juice. Lemon brings out the flavour of other ingredients, so often the addition of a little will really give your dish the flavour boost it needs.

And, when your recipes call for lemon juice, stop using that stuff that comes in the bottle. Squeeze a fresh lemon. It makes all the difference in the world.

Have fun and keep cooking!

Lori and Gerry can be reached at whatscookin@independentfreepress.com

Lemon Poppyseed Loaf

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup butter (or margarine for less calories)
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp grated lemon rind
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1 tbsp poppy seeds
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/3 cup yogurt or light sour cream



Glaze

- 1/4 cup icing sugar
- 2 tbsp lemon juice

Method

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 2-litre loaf pan with non-stick coating.

In a large bowl or food processor, beat together sugar, butter, egg, lemon rind and juice, mixing well. Add milk, mixing well.

Combine flour, poppy seeds, baking powder and baking soda; add to bowl alternately with yogurt, mixing just until incorporated. Do not overmix. Pour into pan and bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until tester inserted into centre comes out dry.

Cool slightly before glazing.

Glaze: prick holes in top of loaf with fork. Combine icing sugar with lemon juice; pour over loaf.

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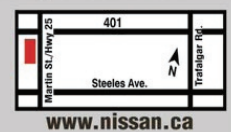
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