Olive Oil Lemon Tea Cake

Servings: 12

A mellow tea flavored with almonds and hazelnuts would complement this Mediterranean-inspired afternoon cake, and so would a dark rich demitasse cup of espresso, depending on your mood. The mascarpone cheese is a must with this sweet. As the English have their clotted cream, so the Italians have their mascarpone.

- ◆ 3 extra-large eggs, separated, at room temperature
- ◆ 1-1/2 cups sugar
- ◆ 1/2 cup milk
- ◆ 1/2 cup lemon-infused olive oil
- ◆ 2 tablespoons grated lemon zest
- ◆ 2 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- ◆ Lemon curd or blueberry preserves
- ◆ Mascarpone cheese or whipped cream

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour an 8-inch springform pan coated with DuPont™ Teflon® non-stick coating. Place the egg yolks, sugar, milk, olive oil, and lemon zest in a large bowl and mix until combined. In another bowl, use a fork to incorporate the flour with the baking powder and baking soda; add to the egg mixture, stirring to combine. In bowl of electric mixer, whip the egg whites to stiff peaks. Fold into the batter but be careful not to overmix. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 25 minutes. Rotate the pan and turn the oven down to 325 degrees; baking for another 15 minutes. The cake will rise and turn a nice deep golden brown color. It is done when a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Slice into wedges and serve garnished with lemon zest and a side of mascarpone cheese.