Banana Cinnamon Swirl Pound Cake

Anne Byrn/Between the Layers

My parents were raised during the Depression, and they learned to not let even a banana go to waste. Ripe bananas that didn't wind up in the cereal bowl went into banana bread. And so that became my way to bake, and as I and others baked our way to sanity during the pandemic of 2020, this was one of the cakes that I enjoyed baking. It is easy. It is resourceful. It is perfect for sharing with others. And it's just a basic coffee cake flavored with one very ripe banana you mash with a fork to make 1/2 cup. If you want to dress up this cake for company substitute 1/2 cup rum for part of the water.

Makes 12 servings

Prep: 15 to 20 minutes

Bake: 42 to 47 minutes

Cake:

Vegetable cooking spray or shortening, for greasing the pan

All-purpose flour, for dusting the pan

1/2 cup finely chopped pecans

1 package (15.25 ounces) yellow or butter recipe cake mix

4 tablespoons (half a 3.4-ounce package) vanilla instant pudding mix

3 large eggs

1 large ripe banana, mashed to make 1/2 cup

1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons water

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. Place a rack in the center of the oven, and heat the oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Grease and flour a 12-cup Bundt pan. Sprinkle the pecans in the bottom of the pan, and set the pan aside.
3. Place the cake mix and pudding mix in a large mixing bowl, and stir to combine. Add the eggs, banana, water, and oil. Beat with an electric mixer on low speed until blended, 30 seconds. Stop the machine, and scrape down the side of the bowl with a rubber spatula. Increase the mixer speed to medium and beat for 1 minute longer until the batter is smooth and fluffy. Measure out 1/2 cup of the batter and place in a small bowl with the cinnamon, and stir to combine. Pour half of the plain batter in the

prepared pan. Dollop half of the cinnamon batter on top, and swirl into the cake with a dinner knife. Pour the rest of the plain batter on top, and dollop with the rest of the cinnamon batter, swirling it in with the knife. Smooth the top with a rubber spatula, and place the pan in the oven.

4. Bake the cake until the top springs back when lightly pressed with a finger and the cake is golden brown, 42 to 47 minutes. Transfer the pan to a wire rack to cool for 20 minutes.

5. Run a long sharp knife around the edges of the cake, shake the pan gently, and invert the cake onto a wire rack or cake plate. Let the cake cool at least 20 minutes longer. Dust with confectioners' sugar, then slice and serve.