



LOCAL FOODIE

Mario Batali

The superstar chef (who summers in Northern Michigan) instructs us in the art of seasonal indulgence.



A ciambella is a simple ring-shaped bread made of egg, shortening and sugar.

Ciambelle were for a long time a symbol of luxury in Italian culture; a fancy bread pictured next to royalty and aristocracy in Renaissance painting.

Today, *ciambelle* are often served as an afternoon snack at a bar or caffè. They can be dressed with glazes, syrups, or, in this case, berry compote.

In this recipe, I incorporate berries abundant in this area, but you can easily substitute whatever berries are available in your farmer's market. With the listed ingredients, this *ciambella* makes the perfect late-summer dessert in this fertile area that I've come to love.—Mario Batali

» Ciambella with Summer Berry Compote

Simple Italian Food (Clarkson Potter 1998)

- 1 pint blueberries
- 1 pint blackberries
- 1 pint raspberries
- Juice of ½ lemon
- ½ cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ cup (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- ¼ cup cold milk

Serves 8

In a large saucepan, combine the berries, lemon juice, and 3 tablespoons sugar. Place over medium heat and heat just to the boiling point, 5 to 6 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Butter a cookie sheet.

Combine remaining ½ cup sugar, flour and the baking powder in a food processor and pulse quickly to blend. Add the cold butter and pulse quickly until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.

In a separate bowl, beat the egg, almond extract, and milk until smooth. With the food processor running, add the liquid all at once and blend 10 to 15 seconds, until the dough just forms a ball.

Transfer the dough to a well-floured cutting board and shape into a log about 14 inches long and 1½ inches thick. Form the log into a ring in the center of the cookie sheet. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until light golden brown. Remove, transfer to a rack, and cool to room temperature.

Cut the cake into slices about 1 inch thick, top with 2 tablespoons of berry compote, and serve.