Papa’s Nilla Wafer Brown Pound Cake

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*Papa’s signature desserts were his pound cake, coconut pie, and hermit cake. Some of the best times I ever shared with Papa were during the execution of these pastries. I loved watching the master at work. Papa cooked with the precision of a chef, carefully measuring his flour with a leftover sugar box. The fragrant perfume of butter and vanilla extract would fill the house. My grandparents’ kitchen was below the guest room. That room had a floor grate, so the aroma of food being cooked downstairs rose to the upstairs rooms. When Papa took his pound cake out of the oven and turned it out, he’d inspect its color. “Nilla wafer brown, nilla wafer brown,” he’d pronounce. That meant it was a good one.*

Makes 10–12 Servings

* 1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
* 1 Crisco Butter Flavor All-Vegetable Baking Stick
* 3 cups sugar
* 5 medium eggs, at room temperature
* 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
* 3 cups cake flour
* 1⁄4 teaspoon salt
* 1 (5 1⁄3-ounce) can Carnation sweetened condensed milk
* 2 ounces water

Prepare a fluted Bundt cake pan by coating the inner surface with the residue from the butter wrapper.

Using an electric mixer, cream the butter, shortening stick, and sugar until fluffy. Crack the eggs into a separate bowl and, with the mixer running, slowly add them into the mixing bowl. Add the vanilla.

Sift together the flour and salt into a separate bowl. Combine the condensed milk and water. Add 1⁄3 of the flour mixture to the creamed butter mixture and mix well. Add 1⁄2 of the milk and water mixture and beat well. Add another 1⁄3 of the flour mixture, the rest of the milk, and then the rest of the flour mixture, beating well after each addition.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Tap the pan on the counter to release the air bubbles.

Place in a cold oven and set it at 325°. Bake for about 1 hour or until a skewer inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean. Turn the cake out onto a plate. Let it cool before serving.

**Promotional Recipe Note:**

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