Under 1 hour

Makes 8 slices

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Ingredients:

- 1 box (500g) PnP vanilla cake mix
- 2 tsp (10ml) lemon essence
- 3 Tbsp (45ml) poppy seeds
- 3 eggs, whisked
- 1 cup (250ml) cream
- ½ cup (60ml) castor sugar
- 1 tsp (5ml) vanilla essence
- 1 Tbsp (15ml) each butter and oil

Compote:

- 1 cup (250ml) water
- 1 cup (250ml) frozen or fresh blueberries
- 2-3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1/4 cup (50g) brown sugar
- ⅓ cup (80ml) rum or vodka

Whipped ricotta:

- 1 packet (180g) ricotta cheese
- ½ tub (87,5g) PnP medium-fat cream cheese
- Juice (60ml) and grated peel of 1 lemon
- ½ cup (60ml) honey

Method

- 1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
- 2. Prepare cake mix according to package instructions.

- 3. Mix in lemon essence and poppy seeds.
- 4. Spoon into a 20x12cm loaf tin and bake for 20-25 minutes.
- 5. Cool completely, then cut cake loaf into 8 slices (about 2cm thick).
- 6. Simmer compote ingredients, except the liquor, in a pot over medium heat for 12-15 minutes until berries break down and water has reduced by half.
- 7. Add vodka in the last 5 minutes of simmering.
- 8. Set aside to cool.
- 9. Combine whipped ricotta ingredients and blitz with a stick blender until smooth. Set aside.
- 10. Whisk eggs, cream, sugar and vanilla together until combined.
- 11. Dip cake slices into egg mixture, coating well.
- 12. Fry in batches (one or two at a time) over medium heat in butter and oil until golden, about 5 minutes a side.
- 13. Serve warm with generous dollops of whipped ricotta and a drizzle of boozy berry compote.

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