

## **Italian Cream Cake**

½ cup butter, softened  
½ cup shortening  
2 cups sugar  
5 large eggs, separated  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
2 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 cup buttermilk  
1 cup flaked coconut  
Nutty Cream Cheese Frosting  
Garnishes: toasted pecan halves,  
chopped pecans

Beat butter and shortening at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy; gradually add sugar, beating well. Add egg yolks, 1 at a time, beating until blended after each addition. Add vanilla, beating until blended.

Combine flour and soda; add to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed until blended after each addition. Stir in coconut.

Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form, and fold into batter. Pour batter into 3 greased and floured 9-inch round cakepans.

Bake at 350°F for 25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes; remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks.

Spread Nutty Cream Cheese Frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake. Garnish, if desired.

## **Nutty Cream Cheese Frosting**

1 cup chopped pecans  
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese,  
softened  
½ cup butter, softened

1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
1 (16-ounce) package powdered sugar,  
sifted

Bake chopped pecans in a shallow baking pan at 350°F, stirring occasionally, 5 to 10 minutes or until toasted. Cool.

Beat cream cheese, butter, and vanilla at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Add powdered sugar, beating at low speed until blended. Beat frosting at high speed until smooth; stir in pecans. Yield: about 4 cups.