Cake Salé with Feta, Olives and Zucchini

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I tested this recipe with feta but many people make cake salé with Comté, Cheddar or fresh goat cheese. Grated carrots could substitute for the zucchini. Replace green olives with black olives. Replace sunflower seeds with walnuts. Replace dill with chives. Add chopped roasted red peppers, corn kernels or diced ham. Make it my way the first time, then feel free to riff with ingredients you like.

Ingredients

- Butter for the baking pan
- 1-3/4 cup sifted all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt or sea salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1/3 cup whole milk
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup coarsely grated zucchini
- 4 ounces Greek or French feta, coarsely crumbled
- ½ cup pitted and diced green olives
- 1/3 cup raw sunflower seeds
- 4 Greek-style pickled peperoncini, stemmed, juice drained, diced (optional but nice)
- 1 heaping tablespoon minced fresh dill

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Directions

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly butter a 9- by 5- by 3-inch loaf pan. Line the pan with parchment paper. The easiest way to do this is to cut two parchment strips—a 5-inch-wide strip that lines the pan lengthwise, with some overhang, and a 9-inch-wide strip that lines the pan widthwise, with some overhang. The strips will overlap on the pan bottom.

In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt.

In another large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk and olive oil. Stir in the zucchini, feta, olives, sunflower seeds, peperoncini and dill. Add the flour mixture and mix just enough to blend; do not overbeat. The batter will be stiff. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and spread it evenly.

Bake until the surface is lightly colored and firm to the touch, about 45 minutes. Set the pan on a rack to cool for about 20 minutes, then grasp the overhanging parchment and lift the cake out of the pan. Peel off the parchment and continue cooling the cake on a rack. Serve warm, not hot.

Makes one 9-inch loaf