

SUMMER! I thought it would never come. The word itself makes me want to sing a song by a little snowman named Olaf from the movie “Frozen.” It’s ironic, he’s a snowman, and yet he loves summer so much that he doesn’t even consider what the heat will do to him. But, the jingle he sings is so fun, innocent and endearing and it makes me want to create a song all of my own, highlighting the many things I love about summer. For starters, I love the long days. I feel so much more accomplished at the end of a summer day compared to any other time of year. I absolutely long for summer nights....now I am starting to sound like Olivia Newton John in Grease ☺. All kidding aside, I am happier during the summer. My kids are out of school so the days are more relaxed and celebrated. There are lake days, pool parties, campouts, and even frequent trips to the beach. One of my most favorite holidays is the Fourth of July. Not only do I love the local fireworks shows, but I just love the patriotism behind the day itself. So, in honor of this celebratory event, I would like to introduce you to my berry special (total pun intended) Fourth of July flag cake recipe!

You heard correct! I have an amazing cake recipe that will not only please a crowd but can be really light and healthy too. It begins with a base. You can choose from healthy bases like pizza dough or angel food cake, all the way to not so healthy choices like using cookie dough, brownies, or even cake. Feel free to tailor the “base” to fit your specific taste and health needs. The only requirement is that you bake it or shape it into a rectangular, like that of a flag.

Next, top it with frosting. I prefer to use whipped cream frosting because it is lighter and healthier than regular buttercream, but there are alternatives. If you chose pizza dough as your base, you may want to top it with ricotta cheese or even Greek yogurt to pack in a little protein. You could even mix in some whipped cream just to give it a little sweetness.

The whipped cream topping I prefer is the kind you find in the frozen section at the grocery store. I always make sure to place it in the refrigerator overnight so it spreads easily. I do recommend if you are using cake as a base, freeze it overnight to keep the crumbs out of the frosting. It also gives your special dessert more shelf life in the heat of the summer day.

Now finally, my favorite part, which also happens to be the artistic and healthiest part of the entire recipe! You will need two types of berries; strawberries and blueberries. The blueberries will stay intact and be used as the “star” portion of the American flag, so make sure you have at least 50 of them in a container or two. The strawberries will need to be sliced in half and then lengthwise in strips so that you can place them in a single file line to form the “colonial stripes” on the flag. Just in case you don’t remember how many, I looked it up. To be authentic, the first and last stripe should be red (strawberries) with 5 more red stripes in between (of course alternating with the whip cream topping serving as the white stripes).

I hope you are getting a vision for the design as I am describing it. I find it so exciting because it’s not often that I can bring a colorful, healthy, and creative dessert to a party and have it be such a crowd pleaser. I love that you can use seasonal fruits in this recipe too, because summer is really all about the berries. Berries are tiny little powerhouses of nutrition. They are bursting with memory and disease fighting nutrients like folate, fiber, and phytochemicals. Side note...they are also really flavorful on their own without any need for added sugar.



So grab a lawn chair and offer to bring dessert to your neighbor’s backyard barbeque or wherever you plan to celebrate this Fourth of July and be sure to boast your red, white, and blue!