**Meera Sodha's vegan recipe for lemon and black sesame loaf cake**

An aromatic lemon cake with a tender crumb and topped off with tahini yoghurt cream

A single shard of sunlight piercing through the windows in February is enough to boost my endorphins. The same is true of a slice of good lemon cake in the coldest months. It meets me exactly where I am: between brightness and comfort. Lemon can be brusque and blunt, but, in this cake, its zest, packed with flavoursome oils, give a gentle, aromatic flavour, while its juice, combined with yoghurt, forms a tender, soft crumb. There are nutritional benefits to eating black sesame seeds, but I've used them here, alongside the tahini yoghurt cream, for pleasure, a nutty crunch and a slick of velvet creaminess.

**Lemon and black sesame loaf cake**

You'll need a 1kg loaf tin and electric beaters. The cake keeps well for a few days, tightly wrapped in foil.

Prep **5 min**
Cook **1 hr, plus cooling time**
Makes **1 x 1kg cake, to serve 8**

For the cake
**100g coconut yoghurt** – I like Coconut Collab
**130ml whole oat milk**
**Finely grated zest of 2 lemons, plus 4 tbsp juice** (from the

zested lemons)
**150g vegan butter**, at room temperature
**175g caster sugar**
**2 tsp vanilla paste**
**250g self-raising flour**
**20g (2 tbsp) black sesame seeds**, plus extra to serve
**½ tsp bicarbonate of soda**
**¼ tsp fine salt**

For the tahini cream
**250ml oat whipping cream**
**8 tbsp icing sugar**
**4 tbsp light tahini**

Heat the oven to 200C (180C fan)/390F/gas 6, grease and line a 1kg loaf tin.

In a small bowl, mix the yoghurt, milk and two tablespoons of the lemon juice.

In a large bowl, mix the butter, sugar, vanilla and lemon zest, then, using electric beaters (or in a stand mixer), whisk until very pale and fluffy. Clean the beaters.

Add the remaining dry ingredients to the butter mixture, then pour in the yoghurt and milk mixture and fold in gently, until everything is well combined. Spoon the batter into the lined tin, then bake for 40 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean. Remove and leave to cool.

While the cake is baking, make the tahini cream. Put the cream in a large bowl and whip with electric beaters for

about five minutes, until it forms soft peaks. Add half the icing sugar, a tablespoon of lemon juice and half the tahini, then whip again for a minute. Add the remaining sugar, tahini and last tablespoon of lemon juice, whip for a final minute, then put in the fridge to chill until needed.

Once the cake has cooled, lift it out of the tin and spread the whipped cream all over the top. Sprinkle on a few sesame seeds, then slice and serve.