

Ingredients (for 16 squares)

2 medium	zucchini; washed
1 cup	brown sugar
2/3 cup	vegetable oil, plus 1 tbsp for pan
2 tbsp	sugar, for coating pan
2 large	eggs
1 tsp	vanilla
1 ½ cups	flour
½ tsp	baking powder
½ tsp	baking soda
1 tsp	ground cinnamon
½ tsp	ground nutmeg
½ tsp	ground ginger
½ tsp	salt

**For decorating (optional):**

Icing sugar
Almond marzipan paste
Food colouring in green, yellow and red

Prepare an 8×8 inch (20×20 cm) baking pan by greasing with one tablespoon of oil, then sprinkling two tablespoons of sugar on top; tilt the pan around, to spread the sugar, coating bottom and sides. Reserve. Remove and discard ends from zucchini. Use the large side of a box grater, to shred zucchini; measure about two cups of thinly julienned zucchini. Reserve. Preheat oven to 350° F (180°C). Add oil, brown sugar, vanilla, and eggs to a bowl, and mix with an egg beater to incorporate until uniform. Place a fine colander on top, and add flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and ground cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger, sifting through the mesh. Mix to incorporate; the batter will be smooth and rather thick, this is normal. Add reserved shredded zucchini, using a spatula to fold into the batter (photo below, left). Once uniform, pour batter into the prepared pan. The thickness of the batter allows for a uniform distribution of the zucchini, not sinking to the bottom. Bake in preheated oven for about 40 minutes, until the top has risen slightly and turned golden brown, and a knife or skewer comes out clean when inserted in the middle of the pan (photo below, centre). Transfer to a cooling rack, and allow to reach room temperature. For a casual snack, slice directly in the pan, and serve. For decorating squares, trim off the top of the cake with a serrated knife, to make it flat. Flip over onto a cutting board, so the bottom of the cake faces up. Trim all four sides for straight, uniform edges. Slice in half one way, then again each half the same way, to obtain four strips; run the knife across the middle of the strips, for eight equal slices. Run the knife across the middle of each row of slices, to obtain sixteen squares (photo below, right):



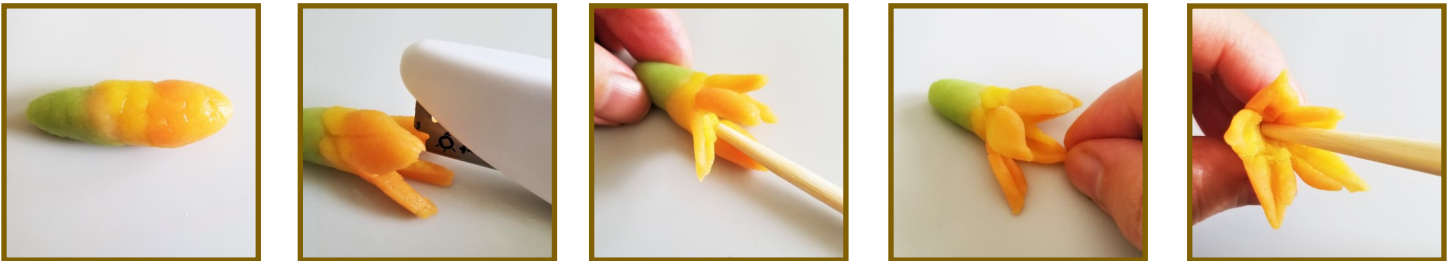
Some squares may be left plain, others dusted with icing sugar, or decorated with marzipan (photo at the top of this page).

Continue on next page ...

To make decorations, start with a bar of almond marzipan, slicing into sections, about one inch (2.5 cm). Cut each section into slices, and add one or two drops of food colouring, for example green (photo below, left). Knead to form a uniform tinted ball. Continue with other sections, adding yellow, or one drop of red and two of yellow for orange, and leaving some of the rest without colouring. Also mix some orange and yellow, to create a lighter shade of orange. Place marzipan in a container or plastic bag; if a modelling kit is not available, assemble a few simple kitchen tools, such as a sharp knife or bread scoring blade, wooden skewers or chopsticks, and toothpicks (photo below, right):



For a female flower, start with a little bit of green, plain, yellow and light orange marzipan, kneading them together in that order, to form a tapered rod, about one inch (2.5 cm) long (photo below, left). Using sharp tool, score the orange end, dividing into five equal sections (second photo, below). Using a chopstick or thick skewer, flatten each orange section, to form petals (third photo, below). Pinch the tip of each petal, to make it pointy (fourth photo, below). Holding the flower from the bottom, press centre with chopstick, to form a cavity (photo below, right):



Take a tiny piece of yellow marzipan and form into a disc; press centre with the tip of a chopstick (photo below, left). Place disc in the centre cavity of the flower, modelling the edges to make it look like pistils, and gently pressing to stick to the flower (photo below, centre). Female flowers have the proto-fruit attached, so just roll the green end into a rod (photo below, right):



For a male flower, follow the same directions, omitting the green end, to form an orange flower; for the centre, form the stamen by rolling a small portion of yellow marzipan into a tiny rod (photo below, left). Place the stamen in the central cavity of the flower (photo below, centre). Roll a small portion of green marzipan into a thin stem, and attach to the bottom of the male flower (photo below, right):



To make a leaf, start with a green disc, then roll the tip of the chopstick back and forth, to thin and form lobes (photo below, left). Score veins in the middle of each lobe with a toothpick, for more detail (photo below, right):



Arrange one flower and one leaf on top of a zucchini square. In the photo below, a square with a male flower (left) and another with a female flower (right):

