BANANA LAYERED CAKE WITH MERINGUE ICING
(adapted from Sprinklebakes)

for the cake:
113 g butter, softened (1 stick)
350 g sugar
3 eggs at room temperature
1 tsp vanilla paste
270 g all-purpose flour
3 + 1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
1 + 1/4 cup milk, at room temperature (about 290 g)
for the frosting:
150 g sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 egg
1 egg yolk
1 cup milk (230 g)
1 tsp vanilla paste
1/4 pound butter (1 stick), softened
2 Tablespoons icing sugar
for the filling:
4 medium bananas, cut into slices
2 Tablespoons butter
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup whipping cream
pinch of salt
2 bananas, sliced, sprinkled with lemon juice
for the frosting:
3 cups granulated sugar
1 cup egg whites

Make the cake. Heat oven to 350 F. Grease the center and perimeter of three 8 inch round cake pans and line the bottom with parchment paper. Grease the center of the paper. In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar, add the eggs, one at a time, and the vanilla paste, beat until combined. In a large bowl, sift the flour, baking powder, and salt. Add to the mixer in three additions, alternating with the milk, beginning and ending with the flour. Beat on high-speed for 3 minutes, cleaning the bowl midway through. Divide the batter in the three pans, bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until a toothpick comes

out clean when inserted in the center of the cake. After the cakes cool in the pan for 10 minutes, invert them on a rack and allow them to completely cool.

Make the custard frosting. Mix the sugar and flour inside a saucepan. Add the egg and egg yolk, whisk vigorously. Add the milk and vanilla and mix very well. Heat gently over medium-low heat until the mixture boils and thickens. The goal is to have the consistency of pudding. Let it cool completely. Beat the butter and icing sugar in an electric mixer using a wire whisk. When they are very well combined and creamy, add the cooled custard prepared before. Beat on high-speed for 7 minutes, until it thickens.

Make the filling. Melt the butter in a large non-stick skillet, add the brown sugar and cook until it starts to dissolve. Add the slices of banana, the heavy cream, and cook everything together until the bananas start to get golden brown and the cream thickens slightly. Cool and reserve.

Assemble the cake. Toss the fresh slices of banana with lemon juice and reserve in a small bowl. Place one cake layer over a cake stand, and spread with a very thin layer of custard frosting. Add half the caramelized bananas, and half the fresh banana slices. Set the second cake layer on top. Add a thing layer of custard, and the remaining of bananas, caramelized and fresh. Top with the final cake layer, bottom side up.

Coat the whole cake with frosting, make it a thin layer, no need to worry about covering the surface, because the meringue icing will take care of that. Keep in the fridge until frosting, for at least a couple of hours.

Make the meringue icing. In the bowl of an electric mixer, mix the egg whites with the sugar and place over a pan with simmering water. Heat until the sugar is fully dissolved and the mixture feels warm to the touch. Immediately hook the bowl to the mixer and beat in high-speed until stiff peak forms. Remove the cake from the fridge and add a thick coating of the meringue frosting. You can then add all sorts of swirls and spikes to the surface, using either your bare fingers (a bit messy), or the back of a spoon. Have fun with it. Torch the surface to give a nice effect all over. Don't burn it to the point it gets black, because then the sugar will taste bitter.