The Cake: Candy Bingham

It was a simple idea. To make a birthday cake for my friend who was turning 70.
I chose an easy recipe for a blueberry crumble cake. 20 minutes preparation, 50 minutes in the oven (or so the recipe claimed!)

First, I turned on the oven to 180 degrees and got out all the ingredients.
Bother, the Baking Soda expired two years ago. Quick trip to the shops to replace.

I decided I'd go all out. I measured the base and sides of the tin and carefully cut baking paper to line it.

I read and reread the instructions. It was simple but gee there were a lot of steps.
It seemed I needed a separate bowl for this and another for that. Some things had to be mixed together, and then added to other things that had been mixed together.

All was going well (although the oven had been heating up for 1 hour by this stage), but why is it that every packet I opened left a trail of dust? Two different types of flour - flour dust, two types of sugar – sugar dust, cinnamon and nutmeg both leaving more on the bench than was needed in the recipe … grrr.

Finally, the mixture was ready, and I carefully scrapped it into my beautifully lined cake tin. But wait, what is that bowl of blueberries doing there? Oh bother, I forgot to "carefully fold them into the mixture".

No problem I thought, I'll just mix them in the cake tin. But they wouldn't have a bar of it. The baking paper kept lifting and getting caught up in the mixture. Defeated, I carefully decanted the now very sticky mixture back into the mixing bowl, leaving a trail of mixture all over the bench, the floor and on numerous utensils.

Eventually I managed to reline the tin and get the berried mixture into it, and into the oven. But OMG what a mess! Five mixing bowls, two food processor bowls, numerous spoons and mixing cups – all covered in either cooking dust or sticky mixture.

The cake needed 50 minutes to bake. I needed 50 minutes to clean up.

No wonder most people just buy a cake! But honestly, having everyone around you saying how yummy the cake you baked is, is worth it. Or is it?