

CHOCOLATE LIQUEUR BALLS

Alcohol/Beer/Wine, Appetizer, Cookies, Holiday/Dinner/Cocktail Party, No Bake/No Cook, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews, Swope Cuisine Cookbook, Swope Party Food, Toast to Autumn

Source: Swope Cuisine Cookbook, Dec. 1989

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups, of fine cookie crumbs / approx. 14 to 16 ounces, of shortbread cookies, or plain crispy cookies, either vanilla or chocolate flavored
- 1 cup finely chopped nuts
- 1/4 cup honey - See Note
- 1/3 cup (or more to taste) of Chocolate liqueur - See Note

For Finishing:

- Powdered sugar
- chocolate sprinkles or finely chopped nuts, optional

DESCRIPTION

This recipe comes from the Swope Alliance cookbook, published in Dec. of 1989. The cookbook was named "Swope Cuisine" and we reprint this recipe here to honor the women of the past who so wonderfully supported the Sheldon Swope Art Museum.

Because the ingredients are so simple, there is plenty of room to create your own version. See some suggestions in the notes.

DIRECTIONS

Use a food processor to crush the cookies into tiny crumbs or use a rolling pin or the side of a clean wine bottle to smash them into fine crumbs on a sheet of wax paper or parchment paper. Measure out 2 cups and transfer to a bowl that is large enough to hold at least 6 cups of batter.

Add the nuts, honey, and liqueur, and stir to combine. The dough should be somewhat sticky but thick. If it is too soft or runny, crush another cookie and add to the dough. Do this one cookie at a time until you get the proper consistency. **Note: If you are making a 1/2 recipe you can leave the cookie crumbs in the processor and use that to mix the dough. But, if your dough is too soft, use the rolling pin method or use any clean round bottle for crushing more cookies.**

Pour some powdered sugar on a plate and spread into a thin pile. Use a teaspoon to pick up a walnut-sized amount of the batter and using 2 spoons, drop the dough ball into the sugar and gently roll around until it is well coated. After a 1/2 hour, roll them in powdered sugar a second time or, instead, roll them in chocolate sprinkles or finely chopped nuts.

Keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

NOTES

Here are some suggestions:

1. Swapping out the honey for a flavored syrup is also possible and the quantity should be about the same, **assuming that the substitute is as thick as honey**. Our suggestion for a substitution is to use a fruit syrup instead of the honey but if the syrup is watery it must be reduced in a small pan on the range until it thickens sufficiently. For one version, we made these balls with raspberry syrup. After the ball was formed and rolled in sugar, we pressed a raspberry into the top of the ball. Then proceeded with firming the dough in the refrigerator.
2. Instead of chocolate liqueur, try Grand Marnier or your favorite liqueur. Grand Marnier is an orange liqueur so consider toping this version with a tiny wedge of a Mandarin orange segment. Keep in mind that it also has a much stronger flavor than chocolate liqueur.
3. Nothing beats using home-baked cookies for this recipe, but make sure they are dry cookies, like a vanilla wafer or a shortbread. If you do buy cookies off the shelf, this recipe will still be delicious, but we recommend not using store-bought vanilla wafers. We looked all over town and the vanilla wafers were all of cheap quality. Try to find the best tasting cookie you can find at the grocery store; they must be crispy and with no toppings or icing.
4. If you decide to make a chocolate liqueur ball, why not use chocolate cookies instead of vanilla? Again homemade is best but there are many options for good tasting chocolate cookies available at local grocery stores. You could roll them in chocolate bars minced fine or chocolate sprinkles or minced nuts or ??

ORANGE SUNSHINE BALLS

Appetizer, Cookies, No Bake/No Cook, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews, Swope Cuisine Cookbook, Swope Party Food, Toast to Autumn

Source: Swope Cuisine Cookbook, Dec. 1989

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 12 ounces shortbread cookies (See Note)
- 1 cup finely chopped nuts
- 1 can frozen orange juice, concentrate, 12 oz. (See Note)

DESCRIPTION

This recipe comes from the Swope Alliance cookbook, published in Dec. of 1989. The cookbook was named "Swope Cuisine" and we reprint this recipe here to honor the women of the past who so wonderfully supported the Sheldon Swope Art Museum.

Because the ingredients are so simple, there is plenty of room to create your own version. See some suggestions in the Notes.

DIRECTIONS

Melt the butter in a very small sauce pan.

In the bowl of a food processor, mix the sugar, broken cookies, and chopped nuts. Use the chopping blade in pulses to get all these ingredients combined and reduced to crumb-sized pieces.

Add the melted butter and stir.

Add the can of orange juice, it helps to be slightly thawed but even frozen chunks will mix in quickly. Stir well until all is smooth. If it is not holding together, break up more cookies and add the crumbs 1 tablespoon at a time until you can form a soft ball.

Prepare a plate with of powdered sugar. Pick up a walnut-sized amount of the dough and roll it around with your finger tips or 2 forks. Place on a plate covered with wax paper and a layer of powdered sugar. A good dusting is sufficient. The wax paper will allow for quick, safe transfer of the cookies to storage and the sugar keeps the cookies from sticking to the plate. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving and store in the refrigerator.

NOTES

Instead of orange juice you could substitute other concentrated frozen juices, such as lemonade, grape juice, daiquiri mix, etc.

You could add an appropriate citrus zest to the powdered sugar that you use to roll the balls in. Or roll in sugar sparkles after the powdered sugar has started to be absorbed by the cookie ball.

The cookies you use don't need to be shortbread. Nothing beats using home-baked cookies for this recipe, but make sure they are dry cookies, like a vanilla wafer or a shortbread. If you do buy cookies off the shelf, this recipe will still be delicious, but we recommend not using store-bought vanilla wafers. We looked all over town and the vanilla wafers were all of cheap quality. Try to find

the best tasting cookie you can find at the grocery store; however, they must be crispy and with no toppings or icing.

If you want to add alcohol, open the juice can and thaw the frozen concentrate, remove 1/3 cup of the juice and stir in 1/3 cup of rum, vodka, Grand Marnier, or whatever pleases you.

OVERNIGHT COFFEE CAKE

Appetizer, Buttermilk, Coffee/Tea Cake, Dessert/Sweets, Fall/Winter Recipe, Holiday/Dinner/Cocktail Party, Overnight baking/prep/breakfast, Swope Cuisine Cookbook, Swope Party Food, Toast to Autumn

Source: Swope Cuisine Cookbook, Dec., 1989

Prep Time: 25 min

Cook Time: 30-35 min plus overnight

Total Time: 1 hour plus overnight.

INGREDIENTS

- 2/3 cup butter at room temperature and very soft
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 fresh eggs
- 2 tablespoons fresh cream or powdered milk
- 1 cup buttermilk

For the Dry Mixture:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon

For the Topping:

- 3 tablespoons finely chopped nuts
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 dash nutmeg

For the optional Icing:

Use your favorite cream cheese icing or store bought

DESCRIPTION

For really easy party prep, make the batter the night before your coffee party, then bake it in time to serve when the guests arrive. (See Notes)

This recipe comes from the Swope Alliance cookbook, published in Dec. of 1989. The cookbook was named "Swope Cuisine" and we reprint this recipe here to honor the women of the past who so wonderfully supported the Sheldon Swope Art Museum.

Because the ingredients are so simple, there is plenty of room to create your own version. See some suggestions in the notes.

DIRECTIONS

Prepare a 9 X 13 cake pan: butter the bottom and sides of the pan well. Set aside.

If you are using a stand mixer:

Add the butter and both sugars to the mixing bowl, blend together until creamy.

If you are stirring by hand:

Use a large bowl and a whisk to blend the butter/sugar until creamy. (See Notes for special instructions)

Then, add the eggs, one at a time, stirring to thoroughly combine before adding the next. Add the cream and buttermilk and stir well, scraping the bowl to combine all the butter mixture evenly into the batter.

In a medium bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and cinnamon. Add this to the butter mixture in small batches; it should 'disappear' before you add more. Scrape the bowl again, stir well, and pour the batter into the prepared pan using an offset spatula or butter knife to smooth the top. Put the coffee cake in the refrigerator overnight.

Finally, 1 hour before serving, or at your convenience, heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until done. (Test with a toothpick.)

If you desire a topping:

This coffee cake is delicious as is. However, if you want a topping, add the nuts to the bowl of a food processor and process until fine, then add the brown sugar and nutmeg and pulse to combine. When the coffee cake comes out of the oven, while the cake is still hot, sprinkle this mixture evenly over the top. (See Notes for optional toppings.)

Serve warm or at room temperature. (See Notes for more suggestions)

NOTES

For hand mixing:

It is very important to start with soft butter, otherwise you will be frustrated trying to get the butter/sugar mixture to be smooth. If you are having problems, just walk away and let the butter soften to room temperature. Then add each of the remaining ingredients in order, ending with the pre-mixed dry ingredients.

Optional toppings:

-You can easily serve this with other toppings if you wish. Use your favorite recipe.

-Or to make it pretty for company, try this: (For this topping - the cake should be room temperature.)

Make the topping and set aside. Make a cream cheese icing, using your favorite recipe, and store everything until it is time to bake the cake. When it is time to put the cake in the oven, be sure that the icing is also brought to room temperature. Use a spatula (an offset spatula works best) to coat the coffee cake with a thin layer of cream cheese icing. Use a spoon to scoop up the topping mixture and hold the spoon about 4 inches above the cake while gently tapping it. This technique helps the topping spread more evenly and reduces the formation of clumps.

Nut allergies:

If you're serving someone with nut allergies, you can omit the nuts from the topping and replace them with sesame seeds or pine nuts.

To bake immediately:

This recipe is designed to be assembled the day before and then baked just before serving. However, if you're eager to bake the cake immediately after mixing the batter, the recipe doesn't explicitly mention this. But don't be afraid to give it a try for a family meal. We have no reason to believe that the cake won't turn out well. If it does, you can definitely make it again!

CANDIED FRUITCAKE

Alcohol/Beer/Wine, Candied Fruit, Christmas, Coffee or Tea Drink, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Italian

Source: cooking.nytimes.com

Total Time: 1 hr 30 min

Servings: 16

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups chopped pitted dates
- 1/4 cup chopped candied citron (more for decorating)
- 1/4 cup chopped candied orange peel (more for decorating)
- 1/4 cup chopped candied lemon peel (more for decorating)
- 1/4 cup candied cherries (more for decorating)
- 1/2 cup hot brewed coffee, preferably espresso
- 1/4 cup Cognac
- 12 tablespoons (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter at room temperature (more for greasing pan) **Divided**
- 3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon ground mace
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

DESCRIPTION

I discovered that candied fruit likes getting soured with currants or dates, and that it isn't fussy about the medium: sherry, rum or Cognac all make it happy. And the trick to baking with it is simple: use the good stuff and use it judiciously. Fold just enough diced peel and choice cherries into a batter with chopped dates and spice and watch the tone and texture lighten up. No one would dream of calling this fruitcake.

DIRECTIONS

Combine dates and candied fruit in a small bowl; pour coffee and brandy over them, and stir to combine. Cover and macerate 6 hours or overnight.

Place oven rack in lowest position and large roasting pan on rack. Fill pan halfway with hot water. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 10-inch tube pan. Stir flour, mace, cinnamon, cloves, salt, baking powder and soda together in medium bowl; set aside.

In mixer with paddle attachment, beat butter on medium speed until light and fluffy, 40 seconds. Scrape down bowl, add brown sugar, and beat until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. Mix in vanilla. Add eggs, beating well after each addition.

With machine on low speed, add dry ingredients, and mix just to combine. Mix in dates, fruit and macerating liquid. Turn batter into cake pan, smoothing top. Bake in water bath until cake has risen and top is brown, about an hour. Remove cake from oven, cool in pan on wire rack 5 minutes, turn out of pan right-side up onto rack and cool completely.

Heat sugar with 1 tablespoon water to a simmer, stirring to dissolve sugar. Simmer until syrup thickens slightly. Remove from heat. Arrange slices of candied fruit on top of cake, and brush with syrup.

NUTRITION

Per Serving based on 16:

Trans Fat: 0 grams

Fat: 10 grams

Calories: 291

Saturated Fat: 6 grams

Unsaturated Fat: 3 grams

Sodium: 193 milligrams

Sugar: 26 grams

Fiber: 2 grams

Carbohydrate: 48 grams

Protein: 4 grams

FRUITCAKE MOSAIKO

Bar Cookies, Candy, Chocolate/Cocoa, Christmas, Coconut Milk/Oil/Sugar, Freeze Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Greek, No Bake/No Cook, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews

Source: washingtonpost.com

Prep Time: 25 mins

Cook Time: 2 hours 25 mins

Servings: 60 servings from one 8 inch sq. pan

INGREDIENTS

- Nonstick cooking spray
- Generous 1 3/4 cups (220 grams) confectioners' sugar
- Generous 1 cup (90 grams) Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 1/8 teaspoon fine salt
- 4 sticks (1 pound/454 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 1/2 cups (150 grams) raspberry shortbread sandwich cookies, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 1/2 cup (70 grams) lightly sweetened coconut strips, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 1 cup (50 grams) freeze-dried figs, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 1 cup (30 grams) freeze-dried mango, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 3/4 cup (25 grams) freeze-dried mixed berries
- 1 cup (120 grams) toasted unsalted pistachios

DESCRIPTION

Mosaiko is a Greek no-bake chocolate dessert similar to chocolate salami. This version pays homage to holiday fruitcake with a mix of cookies, freeze-dried fruit and nuts. When sliced, the cross section resembles the mosaic the treat is named after. The easy and versatile treat is a great way to use any delicious odds and ends in your pantry.

This recipe takes the traditional fruitcake and makes the transition to fun-cookie with panache.

DIRECTIONS

Lightly grease an 8-inch (20-centimeter) square cake pan or baking dish with the nonstick spray, then line with plastic wrap with a generous overhang.

In a large bowl, whisk together the sugar, cocoa powder and salt until combined. Whisk in the melted butter in three additions. The mixture will look liquidy and broken, but as you continue whisking, it will emulsify and turn shiny.

As it starts to come together and thickens in the center, add the water and whisk until completely smooth and glossy. Fold in the cookies, coconut strips, freeze-dried fruit and pistachios until fully coated in the chocolate mixture, then pour into the prepared pan. Smooth the top with an offset spatula or spoon, and place a piece of plastic wrap on top to prevent a skin from forming. Transfer to the refrigerator to fully set, about 2 hours.

Using the plastic wrap overhang like a sling, remove the slab from the pan. Use a sharp knife to cut into four 2-inch-wide (5-centimeter) strips, then cut each strip into approximately 1/2-inch-thick

(1.25-centimeter) slices (you should get 14 or 15 per strip), wiping the blade clean as needed. For an eye-catching presentation, shingle the mosaiko on a serving platter.

NOTES

Storage:

Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks, or freeze for up to 1 month.

Where to buy:

We purchased all the mix-ins from Trader Joe's, but they can be found at other well-stocked supermarkets and online.

From pastry chef Rochelle Cooper.

NUTRITION

Calories 106

Fat 8 g

Saturated Fat 5 g

Carbohydrates 9 g

Sodium 10 mg

Cholesterol 18 mg

Protein 1 g

Fiber 1 g

Sugar 6 g

GOOD FRUITCAKE

Alcohol/Beer/Wine, Candied Fruit, Christmas, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews

Source: cooking.nytimes.com

Total Time: 2 hr + cooling

Servings: 2 fruitcakes

INGREDIENTS

- Butter for pans
- 1 pound pitted Medjool dates
- 1/2 pound prunes from Agen or use more dates
- 1 pound candied pineapple
- 1 pound candied cherries
- 1 cup chopped candied orange peel, or 1/4 cup freshly grated orange zest
- 2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons double acting baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons almond extract
- 2 cups shelled salted pistachios
- 1 cup shelled almonds
- 2 1/2 cups shelled pecans
- 2 cups shelled walnuts
- White corn syrup
- 1/3 cup Armagnac, bourbon or whiskey

DESCRIPTION

The ridicule that most fruitcakes face has everything to do with bad recipes, which skimp on fruit and load on the batter. In a good fruitcake the batter should barely be perceptible, acting merely as adhesive to bind the fruit and nuts. Broken down into its parts, a good fruitcake contains ingredients that most people love: plump dates, candied cherries, almond extract, pecans, walnuts and sugar. And when it comes out of the oven, it is showered in whiskey. This is by no means an inexpensive cake to make, and that is largely why it became a traditional gift. It is a cake that you wouldn't make for yourself. It is a treat.

DIRECTIONS

Butter two 9-inch springform pans. Line with parchment paper, and butter again. Heat oven to 275 degrees.

Coarsely chop dates, prunes and pineapple. Combine fruit in a bowl with cherries and orange peel. Sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Sift this over fruit. With your hands, toss to coat.

In medium bowl, beat eggs until frothy. Beat in sugar, then almond extract. Pour over fruit. With wooden spoon, mix well. Fold in pistachios, almonds, pecans and walnuts, and mix until coated with batter.

Divide mixture between pans. Using your hands, pack batter firmly and fill in open spaces. Bake for about 1 1/2 hours, until tops of cakes look dry but not brown. When cakes are done, transfer to cooling racks. Let stand for 5 minutes, then release springform and peel off parchment paper on sides.

While cakes are still hot, brush lightly with corn syrup. Let cool 30 minutes, then spoon Armagnac on top. When completely cool, remove cakes from pan base and peel off parchment paper on bottom. If not eating right away, wrap fruitcakes in plastic wrap. They will keep for two months in refrigerator. If storing, sprinkle with more Armagnac an hour before serving.

NOTES

Adapted from Woman's Day magazine, November 1965

ONE DAY FRUITCAKE

Alcohol/Beer/Wine, Bundt Cake, Citrus, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Jelly/Jam/Jello/Preserves, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews

Source: cooking.nytimes.com

Servings: 12 to 14 servings

INGREDIENTS

For the Fruit Mixture:

- 1 1/4 cups/170 grams dried cherries
- 1 1/3 cups/170 grams dried apricots, cut into 1-centimeter pieces
- 1 1/3 cups /170 grams prunes, cut into 1-centimeter pieces
- 3/4 cup/113 grams dried cranberries
- 3/4 cup/113 grams dried currants
- 1/2 cup/113 grams dark rum or brandy
- 1/2 cup/113 grams fresh orange juice
- 8 ounces/226 grams unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for the pan, **Divided**
- 2 cups/270 grams all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan, **Divided**
- 1 1/2 cups/170 grams walnuts or pecans
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal) or 3/4 teaspoon coarse kosher salt (such as Morton's)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 3/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- Pinch of ground cloves
- 3/4 cup/165 grams packed dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon finely grated orange zest
- 7 ounces/200 grams almond paste
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

After Baking:

- 1/3 cup/76 grams dark rum or brandy
- 1/3 cup/107 grams apricot preserves
- 1 1/2 cups/165 grams confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Pinch of kosher salt

DESCRIPTION

Though this cake requires you to soak dried fruit overnight in a mixture of rum and orange juice, allowing it to become plump and soft and flavorful, before you assemble the batter, it's exceedingly faster (and every bit as delicious) as a traditional fruitcake that takes weeks to age. For the best flavor, use the highest-quality dried fruit you can find.

DIRECTIONS

Make the fruit mixture:

The day before you bake the cake, combine the dried cherries, apricots, prunes, cranberries, currants, rum and orange juice in a medium bowl and fold thoroughly to combine. Cover the bowl tightly and let sit at room temperature until the fruit is soft and has absorbed all (or nearly all) of the liquid, stirring once or twice, 12 to 24 hours.

Arrange an oven rack in the center position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Generously brush the inside of a 12-cup Bundt pan with butter. Dust the inside of the pan with several pinches of flour, then tap the pan on the counter at different angles to coat every buttered surface. Tap out the excess, then set the pan aside.

Scatter the walnuts (or pecans) across a sheet tray and transfer to the oven. Toast until the walnuts are golden brown and fragrant, shaking the pan halfway through, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool completely on the baking sheet, then chop the walnuts. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, ginger, baking powder, allspice, baking soda and cloves. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the butter, brown sugar, lemon zest and orange zest. Pinch off small pieces of the almond paste and add to the bowl. Using a hand mixer, beat the mixture on medium-low until combined, then increase the speed to medium-high and continue to beat, scraping down the sides once or twice, until the mixture is light and fluffy, about 3 minutes.

With the mixer on low, add the eggs one at a time, increasing the speed just to incorporate each egg before decreasing to low and adding the next, until the mixture is very smooth. Beat in the vanilla, then, on low speed, add the flour mixture and mix just until it disappears. Tip in the fruit mixture, along with any unabsorbed liquid, along with the chopped nuts; use a flexible spatula to fold the batter several times, scraping the sides and bottom of the bowl, until the fruit is evenly distributed.

Scrape the batter into the prepared Bundt pan, distributing it evenly all the way around and taking care not to form large air pockets. Smooth the surface, then bake the cake until the surface is golden brown, risen and cracked, and a cake tester inserted into a crack comes out clean, 1 hour 10 minutes to 1 hour 20 minutes. Let the cake cool in the pan for 15 minutes.

Use a skewer or toothpick to poke holes all over the surface of the cake. Use a pastry brush to generously soak the cake with about half of the rum. Let the cake absorb the rum for a few minutes, then turn it out onto a wire rack. Poke more holes all over the cake and dab the remaining rum across every surface.

Warm the apricot preserves in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring often with a heatproof flexible spatula, just until the preserves are fluid. Pass the preserves through a fine mesh sieve into a small bowl, pressing on the solids with the spatula to extract as much of the liquid as possible (scrape the solids back into the jam jar). Use the pastry brush to paint the strained jam over the cake, covering every surface. Let the cake sit uncovered until it's completely cooled and the jam is set (it should be slightly tacky but not wet to the touch).

In a medium bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar, milk, lemon juice and a pinch of salt, and whisk slowly to combine, then whisk vigorously until you have a thick, smooth icing. Slowly pour the icing onto the tallest part of the cake all the way around, letting it slowly cascade down the side. Let the cake sit until the icing is completely set, about 1 hour.

PANAMA FRUITCAKE

Alcohol/Beer/Wine, Candied Fruit, Carribean, Christmas, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake

Source: washingtonpost.com

Servings: 16

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/3 teaspoon baking soda
- 2/3 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons vegetable shortening
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3/4 teaspoon liquid burnt sugar (see Description)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3 cups prepared fruits (see NOTE)
- 1/2 cup mincemeat (with brandy; see Description)
- 2 tablespoons rum, or more for long-term storage (see Description)
- 2 tablespoons brandy, or more for long-term storage (see Description)

DESCRIPTION

The fruit for this rich, traditional Caribbean cake needs time to soak in a mixture of rum, brandy and port, so start it now for December eating.

Esencias Panameñas chef-owner Yadira Stamps typically soaks the fruit for the cakes she makes and sells for as long as three years. She uses her mother's recipe. You'll need a 9-inch round cake pan with sides at least 2 inches high.

Liquid burnt sugar, which tastes like a cross between molasses and caramel, is an ingredient often found in Caribbean recipes and can be purchased online or at Caribbean grocery stores.

Mincemeat is a blend of raisins, apples and spices, and is traditionally made with beef suet and brandy. Vegetarian versions can be found online and in stores.

NOTE: The prepared fruits in this recipe must be assembled at least 30 days before the day you plan to prepare and bake your fruitcake. The fruit needs to soak for at least that long. (Or follow quick-soak directions; see NOTES.) The cake can be wrapped and stored in a cool, dry place for up to 6 months (with periodic brushing; see below) or frozen for up to 6 months.

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Lightly grease the pan with baker's spray, then line the bottom with parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice and salt onto a sheet of parchment or wax paper.

Combine the butter, shortening and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer; beat on medium speed for several minutes, until light and fluffy. Stop to scrape down the bowl.

Whisk the eggs in a separate bowl until evenly combined, adding the water gradually until well incorporated. Whisk in the liquid burnt sugar and vanilla extract.

Add the egg mixture to the butter-sugar mixture in the mixer bowl, then fold in the prepared fruits and their liquid, plus the mincemeat; this may be best to do by hand, because the mixture can be heavy and could potentially burn out the mixer motor. Add the flour mixture a quarter-cup at a time, combining thoroughly. A spoon should be able to stand up in the middle of the batter.

Spoon the batter into the cake pan and smooth the surface. Bake (middle rack) for 1 hour and 15 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean; if that does not happen, reduce the temperature to 300 degrees and bake for an additional 10 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Let the cake cool in its pan for 1 hour.

Use a toothpick or wooden skewer to poke several holes in the top of the cake, then mix the brandy and rum together and pour on top of the cake. Remove the cake from the pan. The cake can be stored in an airtight container in a cool, dry place for up to 6 weeks; brush the top of the cake with 2 teaspoons of brandy or rum once a week to help keep it moist.

NOTES

From Yadira Stamp, chef-owner of Esencias Panameñas in the District's Petworth neighborhood.

NOTE: To make the prepared fruits, combine 1 1/4 cups finely chopped Paradise Extra Fancy Fruit Cake Mix (candied fruits), 1 1/4 cups raisins, 1/2 cup currants, 1/4 cup rum, 2 tablespoons brandy and 2 tablespoons port in an airtight container. Allow the fruits to soak for at least 30 days. If unable to soak for a long period, place all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then reduce the heat to medium and cook for 15 minutes. Let cool to room temperature. This quick-cook mixture can be placed in an airtight container and stored in a cool, dark place for several weeks, until ready to use.

NUTRITION

Based on 16 servings:

Calories 260

Fat 4 g

Saturated Fat 2 g

Carbohydrates 48 g

Sodium 90 mg

Cholesterol 30 mg

Protein 2 g

Fiber 2 g

Sugar 34 g

SYLVIA'S FRUITCAKE

Alcohol/Beer/Wine, Christmas, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews

Source: cooking.nytimes.com

Total Time: 3 hr 15 min

Servings: 1 six-pound cake

INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces walnut halves
- 8 ounces pecan halves
- 8 ounces brazil nuts
- 16 ounces pitted dates
- 16 ounces dried apricots
- 12 pitted prunes, halved
- 4 ounces mixed candied fruits
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 cup maraschino cherries
- 1 1/2 cup sifted unbleached flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 3/4 cup brandy
- Additional brandy for soaking

DESCRIPTION

This cake is especially appealing to those who do not care for even the best quality candied fruit. It is more dried fruits and nuts than cake.

DIRECTIONS

Grease the bottom and sides of an eight-cup souffle dish or a 9-by-5-by-3-inch loaf pan. Line with brown paper; grease the paper.

Combine the walnuts, pecans, brazil nuts, dates, apricots, prunes, candied fruits, raisins and cherries in a large bowl.

Sift the flour, baking powder and salt over the nuts and fruits. Toss lightly until well coated.

Beat the eggs, sugar, and vanilla in a medium-size bowl with an electric mixer until the mixture is fluffy and light. Pour over the nut mixture. Stir gently to combine.

Fill the prepared dish or pan, pressing the cake mixture firmly. Bake at 275 degrees for about two hours. (If the top is browning too quickly, cover with buttered foil.)

Remove the cake to a wire rack. Spoon one-quarter cup of brandy over the cake. Let stand one hour. Invert the cake and peel off the paper. Turn it right side up and let it stand on the wire rack until it is completely cooled. Place the wire rack in a shallow pan and spoon the remaining one-half cup of brandy over the cake.

To store, wrap the cake in cheesecloth that has been soaked in brandy. Wrap in heavy-duty aluminum foil or store in tightly covered container.

TRADITIONAL SIENA FRUITCAKE (PANFORTE)

Candied Fruit, Christmas, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews

Source: cooking.nytimes.com

Total Time: 1 hr 30 min

Servings: 1 panforte

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup whole hazelnuts
- 1 cup blanched almonds
- 1 cup coarsely chopped candied orange peel
- 1 cup finely chopped citron
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 1/2 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
- Pinch ground white pepper
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- Confectioners' sugar

DESCRIPTION

This is a fruitcake for those who don't want alcohol.

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

Toast hazelnuts on a baking sheet in the oven until the skins pop and blister, 10 to 15 minutes. Rub the skins from the hazelnuts in a kitchen towel. Toast the almonds on a baking sheet until very pale golden, about 10 to 15 minutes. Chop the almonds and hazelnuts very coarsely.

Reduce oven temperature to 300 degrees.

Mix the nuts, orange peel, citron, lemon zest, flour, cinnamon, coriander, cloves, nutmeg and pepper together thoroughly in a large mixing bowl.

Butter a nine-inch springform pan, line the bottom and sides with parchment paper and then butter the paper.

Heat the granulated sugar, honey and butter in a heavy saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly until the syrup registers 242 to 248 degrees on a candy thermometer (a little of the syrup will form a ball when dropped into cold water). Immediately pour the syrup into the mixture of fruits and spices in the large bowl and stir quickly until thoroughly blended. Pour immediately into the prepared pan and smooth the top with a spatula. The batter will become stiff and sticky very quickly so you must work fast.

Bake about 40 minutes. The panforte won't color or seem very firm even when ready but it will harden as it cools. Cool on a rack until the cake is firm to the touch.

Remove the sides of the pan and invert the cake onto a sheet of waxed paper. Peel off the parchment paper. Dust heavily with confectioners' sugar.

WHITE FRUITCAKE

Christmas, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Ginger/Gingerbread, Nuts/Seeds/Cashews

Source: washingtonpost.com

Servings: 32, Makes two 4 1/2-by-8 1/2-inch loaves

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups golden raisins
- 1 cup dried unsulphured unsweetened apricots, cut into quarters (about 7 ounces)
- 1 cup chopped crystallized ginger
- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose or cake flour, **Divided**
- 16 tablespoons (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 5 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons finely grated orange zest
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- 2 cups chopped pecans, toasted and cooled (see NOTE)

DESCRIPTION

One of Nathalie Dupree's editors at Atlanta Magazine gave her this recipe years ago, after she revealed herself to be anti-fruitcake. She fell in love with it. "This one will be eaten, not re-gifted," she says.

This fruitcake does not contain alcohol. A nice choice when there are children at the table.

DIRECTIONS

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat the oven to 250 degrees. Spray two 4 1/2-by-8 1/2-inch loaf pans with nonstick oil-and-flour spray. Line with 2 pieces of parchment or wax paper, one cut to the width of the pan and the other to the length of the pan plus 4 inches of overhang to use as handles to lift the loaf from the pan.

Toss the raisins, apricots and ginger in 1/4 cup of flour until evenly coated.

Cut the butter into 1-inch pieces, add them to the bowl of a stand mixer or hand-held electric mixer and beat on low speed until soft, about 3 minutes. Increase the speed to medium and beat for 1 or 2 minutes, until the mixture looks like lightly whipped cream. Reduce the speed to low and add the sugar 1 tablespoon at a time, gradually increasing the speed and beating until well whipped, 5 or 6 minutes.

Combine the eggs and extracts in a small bowl, then add to the butter mixture in 4 additions, beating for 1 minute on medium-low speed after each addition. The mixture might look curdled, but all will be well.

Sift the remaining 2 1/2 cups of flour with the baking powder and salt onto a piece of wax paper. With the mixer on low speed, add half of the flour mixture to the batter, beat well, then add the remaining flour mixture and beat.

Once the flour is incorporated, use a flexible spatula to fold in the grated zests, then the nuts and dried fruit. Divide the batter evenly between the prepared pans. Tap each pan once against the counter to remove any air bubbles, and smooth the tops.

Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 1/2 hours or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. (The cakes will be white and might give the appearance of being underbaked even though they are not.) Transfer the pans to a wire rack to cool for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around the insides of the pans to loosen the cakes. Use the parchment paper handles to remove the cakes from the pans and transfer them to the wire rack. Remove the parchment or wax paper and cool the cakes thoroughly.

NOTES

NOTE: To toast pecans, spread them on a baking sheet and place in a 350-degree oven, shaking the sheet occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes. Watch carefully; nuts burn quickly.

The cakes can be tightly wrapped and stored at room temperature for 3 days or frozen for up to 4 months.

Adapted from "Mastering the Art of Southern Cooking," by Nathalie Dupree and Cynthia Graubart (Gibbs Smith, 2012).

NUTRITION

Per serving, based on 32:

Calories 230

Fat 12 g

Saturated Fat 5 g

Carbohydrates 30 g

Sodium 65 mg

Cholesterol 50 mg

Protein 3 g

Fiber 2 g

Sugar 17 g

WHITE HOUSE FRUITCAKE

Alcohol/Beer/Wine, Candied Fruit, Christmas, Citrus, Dried Fruit, Fruitcake, Jelly/Jam/Jello/Preserves

Source: cooking.nytimes.com

Total Time: 1 hr 30 min

Servings: 30 servings from 3 loaf cakes

INGREDIENTS

- 15-ounce package raisins
- 2 cups golden raisins
- 1 cup currants
- 10 ounces mixed candied fruits
- 1 6-ounce mixture of glazed pears, peaches, apricots, figs and dates, cut up
- 1/3 cup candied pineapple
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 4 ounces slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup bourbon or Port
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 1/2 pound butter
- 1/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 1/3 cup sifted all-purpose flour, **Divided**
- Grated rind of 2 lemons
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla
- 5 eggs
- 1 cup sifted cake flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

After Baking:

- 1 12-ounce jar apricot preserves
- 1/2 cup rum
- 6 to 8 tablespoons bourbon
- 1 pound confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons softened butter

DESCRIPTION

Pastry chef Roland Mesnier has updated the version of the fruitcake made at the White House for many years.

From Marian Burros, 12/1/1985, NYTimes Magazine:

With or without frosting, the sooner fruitcakes are made, the better they will taste. It is almost impossible to age a fruitcake too long. As White House pastry chef Roland Mesnier says, "They are even better the second year."

Even those who have never dared to attempt a layer cake will find baking fruitcake quite simple. Because texture is not important, a minor error in measuring or mixing will not show. Heavy by nature, it's impossible to overbeat a fruitcake. It is, however, possible to overbake one. Unlike layer cakes, when a fruitcake is done, a tester inserted in the center will still be distinctly moist and sticky, though free of unbaked dough. If a fruitcake is baked until the tester comes out dry, so will the cake.

It isn't even necessary to have special pans for baking fruitcakes. They can be prepared in anything from round cake tins and loaf pans to coffee cans and frozen orange-juice containers. But the method of storage is almost as important as the baking itself. Fruitcakes should be stored in a cool place, but not the refrigerator, covered with cheesecloth soaked in spirits and kept in tightly covered containers or well wrapped in aluminum foil. Periodically, the cakes should be checked and the cheesecloth remoistened if it has begun to dry out.

For those who do not wish to use spirits, orange juice or grape juice may be substituted. If using a nonalcoholic moistener, the procedure is slightly different. The cake should be stored in a tin or in foil until a week before serving. Then it should be sprinkled with orange or grape juice and rewrapped.

DIRECTIONS

Combine the raisins, currants, candied fruits, glazed fruits, candied pineapple, pecans and almonds with the bourbon and brandy in a large bowl. Refrigerate overnight, or if possible, for two days.

Beat the butter, brown sugar, granulated sugar, honey, 1/3 cup of all-purpose flour, grated lemon rind, almond and vanilla extracts until well blended.

Beat in eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Sift together 1 cup of all-purpose flour, 1 cup of cake flour, salt, baking powder, nutmeg and cinnamon together. Add to the batter and beat until well mixed. Combine batter with the fruit and nut mixture, mixing well.

Grease three 8 1/2-by-4 1/2-by-2 1/2-inch pans. Line the bottoms and sides with aluminum foil; grease the foil. Spoon the batter into the prepared pans, smoothing tops.

Bake at 350 degrees for one hour or until the centers spring back when lightly pressed. If tops are browning too fast, cover lightly with buttered foil.

While the cakes are baking, bring the apricot preserves to a hard boil and boil for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, to reduce.

Remove the cakes from the oven and while they are still hot, sprinkle with the rum. Then brush with the hot apricot jam.

Mix enough bourbon with confectioners' sugar and butter to make a frosting that is thin enough to spread on top of the apricot jam while the cakes are still warm.

Cool cakes in pans on wire rack. Allow frosting to dry. Remove cakes from pans; peel off foil. Cool completely. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate. Cake should be sliced chilled.

NUTRITION

Based on 30 Servings (or 10 slices/loaf):

Trans Fat: 0 grams

Fat: 12 grams

Calories: 397

Saturated Fat: 5 grams

Unsaturated Fat: 6 grams

Sodium: 71 milligrams

Sugar: 52 grams

Fiber: 3 grams

Carbohydrate: 67 grams

Protein: 4 grams