

FOOD FORUM *

Dorothy Johnson

A Labor of Love

Home-baked fruit cakes



Fruitcakes baked now will have time to age gracefully for the rich, full-bodied flavor which is expected of these holiday treats.

Whether you make them for family consumption, or for ideal personal holiday gifts, they are a labor of love. Aging takes patience. The dark, almost black fruitcakes, treasured by fine cooks, need to age a couple of months. For best results, the cake is wrapped tightly in aluminum foil or plastic film and put in a cool place so the rich flavors of fruit and spice blend properly.

The use of wine, brandy or other liquor in aging is optional. If you like the flavor, sprinkle the cake lightly with wine or brandy, then wrap it in a clean cloth dampened with the liquor before wrapping for aging.

Lighter, less richly fruited cakes don't require as much aging as the dark fruitcakes. But they, too, are improved in flavor by aging for at least a few weeks. A glaze and candied fruit decorations give professional polish to fruitcakes. Cakes should be cooled thoroughly before glazing and they can even be aged before glazing, if more convenient.

Fruitcake baking is a big job, most easily done in two steps. Prepare the fruit and nuts one day, then mix and bake cakes the following day.

Remember that fruitcakes burn easily. If the top browns before the cake is done, cover it with foil. Paper lining in pans prevents scorched bottom crusts.

The first recipe here is a traditional dark fruitcake and the second, a lighter quality cake. The glaze may be used on either of these two fruitcake favorites.

HEIRLOOM FRUITCAKE

2 lbs. candied cherries, 1 lb. brown sugar, 2 lbs. candied pineapple, 1 doz. large eggs, 1/2 lb. citron, 3 tsp. vanilla, 1/2 lb. candied orange peel, juice 1 lge. lemon, 1/2 lb. candied lemon peel, juice 1 lge. orange, 11 oz. shelled pecans, 4 c. sifted flour, 2 lbs. pitted dates, 2 tsp. baking powder, 2 lbs. golden raisins, 1 tsp. soda, 1 lb. dark raisins, 1 tsp. nutmeg, 1 lb. currants, 1 tsp. allspice, 1 lb. butter or margarine, 3 tsp. cinnamon, 1 c. brandy, wine; 1 (12 oz.) jar apple or grape juice, grape jelly.

Dice candied fruits and peels, break nuts into coarse pieces and snip dates and raisins into small pieces with scissors dipped in hot water. Combine fruits and nuts in large bowl and toss with enough additional flour to coat well.

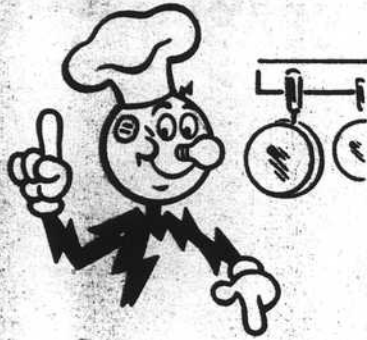
Cream together butter and brown sugar until fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in vanilla, lemon and orange juices. Sift together flour, baking powder, soda, nutmeg, allspice, and cinnamon. Beat together jelly and brandy until smooth. Alternately, add flour mixture and jelly mixture to the creamed mixture, blending well. Stir in fruit and nut mixture. Dough will be very stiff, so a wood paddle or scraper will mix most efficiently.

Grease pans, line with brown paper, and grease the paper. Turn batter into pans, filling three-fourths full and smoothing tops. Bake at 200 deg. until a wooden toothpick inserted near centers of cakes comes out clean. Loaf cakes will take 2-1/2 hours, or in 10-inch tube pans, 6-1/2 hours to bake.

Cool cakes in pans. Remove cakes from pans and pour a little wine over tops. Wrap in cloth soaked in wine, then wrap in foil. Store in a cool place (but not refrigerator) at least a month before you serve it. Makes 10 lbs.

GOLDEN FRUITCAKE

1 c. golden raisins, 3 tsp. baking powder, 1/2 lb. candied citron, 1-1/2 tsp. salt, 1/2 lb.



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Remember that eggs should always be cooked at a low temperature.

Soft- and Hard-Cooked Eggs

Place eggs in cold water. Bring slowly to a boil and reduce heat to simmer.

Medium soft: leave in water 2 to 5 minutes depending on firmness desired.

Hard-cooked: leave in water 15 to 20 minutes.

If hard-cooked eggs are to be used cold, plunge immediately into cold water for a few minutes before removing shell. This helps to prevent dark rings from forming around yolks.

To make a quick job of peeling soft- or hard-cooked eggs, roll them rapidly between the palms of your hands. Begin peeling at the large end of the egg.

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candied orange peel, 1 c. shortening, 1 lb. candied cherries, 2 c. sugar, 3/4 c. blanched almonds, 6 eggs, 4 c. sifted flour, 1 tsp. lemon extract, 1 c. orange juice.

Snip raisins with scissors dipped in hot water and chop citron, orange peel, cherries and almonds. Sift together flour, baking powder, and salt. Sprinkle flour mixture over fruit and mix to coat fruit well. Cream together shortening and sugar until fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Add lemon extract, blending well. Add fruit mixture, alternately, with orange juice, mixing thoroughly.

Grease three 9x5 in. loaf pans, line with brown paper and grease paper. Turn dough into prepared pans and bake at 275 deg. for 3-1/2 hours, or until a wooden toothpick inserted near centers of cakes comes out clean. Cool cakes in pans, turn out and wrap in foil. Store in cool place (not in refrigerator) for at least two weeks before serving. Makes about 7 lbs.

FRUITCAKE GLAZE

1 c. sugar, 1/2 c. water, 1/3 c. light corn syrup.

Combine sugar, corn syrup, and water in saucepan. Cook, stirring constantly, until syrup spins a fine thread (300 deg. on candy thermometer.) Brush hot syrup over cooled fruitcakes. Let dry until tacky, then arrange candied cherries, citron or pineapple in design on top of cake and brush with more glaze. Let glaze dry thoroughly before covering cake for storage.

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Judge Sampson Incurs Rent Strikers' Wrath

CHICAGO - (NPI)--The suspension of Municipal Court Judge Edith Sampson has been urged by several Westside organizations.

The Negro judge was accused of evicting two members of the East Garfield Park Tenants union without letting their attorney present a defense.

Calling for action against Judge Sampson were the East Garfield Park Community Union, the Community Union of Lawndale, the West Side federations, and the Lawndale Union to End Slums.

The two tenants union members, Mrs. Eveldean Gentry and Mrs. Ethel Heard, had been participating in a rent strike called by the union to protest conditions of their low-income-area building.

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