

An Irresistible Fruit Cake

Even confirmed 'I don't like fruit cake' eaters have had a second slice of this. And a third.

You'll need:

- 1 cup rum
- 3 cups whisky
- 2 cups sultanas
- 1 cup currants
- 2 cups crystalised cherries
- 2 cups crystalised lemon and orange rind
- 1 cup glace melon, but glace apricots or glace ginger or more glace cherries make an excellent alternative
- Juice of 2 limes

Cover these ingredients and leave overnight.

Add to the above mixture

- 250g butter, in chunks
- 2 tbsp cinnamon
- 2 tbsp mixed spice

Heat gently till the butter is melted. Leave to cool. Time to cook.

Add 6 very small bantam eggs, or 4 large eggs, mixing well.

Now add 2 cups of plain flour, or a little more if it seems too moist. This will depend on how dry your dried fruit was – moist fruit will take up less of the whisky and rum.

Place in a deep cake tin. I line the edges with 3 sheets of baking paper.

Place on a tray covered with thick newspaper, well soaked. Bake at 150°C for 3-6 hours.

Lay foil over for the first 2 hours of cooking.

Remove when the top is just firm. If the cake seems to be browning too fast turn the heat down.

Long slow cooking is what turns this dark, soft and irresistible. A fast-cooked fruit cake is a dry one.

Drizzle a cap full of whisky on each cake as soon as it is just out of the oven.

Cool in tin before turning out. Wrap in alfoil and keep for up two a year in a cool place.

Note: This made one gigantic and two small cakes. The small cakes were cooked long before the big one. I don't serve this to kids. Even though the alcohol has been evaporated by the cooking and heat of the cakes, the flavour is still there, made even better in the cooking. I want kids to think of my kitchen as a place of love and deliciousness, but it's best if they don't associate love and deliciousness with the taste of rum and whisky.