

Traditional Christmas Cake

Ingredients

250g butter, melted
250g dark brown sugar
3 eggs
½ cup milk
½ tsp bi-carb soda
¾ tsp each vanilla and lemon essence
20g mixed spice
350g plain flour
1kg mixed fruit
¼ cup sherry.



Decorations [Optional]

2 tbsp apricot jam
walnut halves
whole almonds
pecan halves
glace cherries

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180oC using a normal setting ...NOT fan forced under any circumstances. Line base and sides of cake tins, ensuring that paper come up 5cm above the cake tin sides in height.
2. Put fruit, essences, mixed spice, bi-carb soda, and sugar into large bowl and mix well.
3. Melt butter and milk together, add the sherry to the butter mixture and pour over fruit mixture. Combine well, cover with cling wrap and store in a cool place overnight for the flavours to develop.
4. Add eggs to the developed fruit, 1 at a time and mix well with large wooden spoon.
5. Gradually add flour until all incorporated. Do not overbeat.
6. Place batter into pre-lined tins, smooth the surface and gently tap to remove any air bubbles. Bake for ½ hour at 180oC.
7. Reduce heat to 140oC and continue to bake for an extra 1 ½ hours, or until skewer comes out clean.
8. Cover cake with alfoil and allow to cool completely in the tin. Remove and double wrap with cling wrap, finish with alfoil [cake is wrapped 3 times in total to assist storage].
9. Store in a cool dry place until required.

To decorate:

1. Melt 2 tbsp of apricot jam and brush over the cake.
2. Gently push the nuts and glace cherries on to the cake in any design you wish using the sticky jam as glue.
3. Leave the nuts and cherries to set on to the cake.
4. Finally, heat a little more jam and brush over the top of the nuts and cherries to give a shiny finish.