

Delia Smith's Creole Christmas Cake

For the pre-soaking:

3 tbsp	dark rum
3 tbsp	brandy
3 tbsp	cherry brandy
3 tbsp	port
3 tbsp	water
1 ½ tsp	Angostura bitters
½ tsp	ground cinnamon
½ tsp	ground nutmeg
½ tsp	ground cloves
½ tsp	salt
1 ½ tsp	vanilla extract
1 tbsp	dark brown sugar
1 lb (450g)	Thompson raisins
8 oz (225g)	currants
4 oz (110g)	stoned no-soak prunes, chopped
2 oz (50g)	glace cherries, chopped
4 oz (110g)	mixed candied peel, chopped
2 oz (50g)	mixed chopped nuts (a mix of pecans, walnuts, and filberts is nice)



For the cake:

9 oz (250g)	self-raising flour
9 oz (250g)	demerara sugar
9 oz (250g)	unsalted butter, room temp (stick: 75 min thaw if taken from freezer; 30 min if taken from fridge)
5 large eggs	

One week before baking: measure out all of the pre-soaking ingredients, checking them off to ensure you have all of them. Pour all into a large saucepan. Bring the mixture to simmering over low heat (so it does not boil); simmer 15 min. Allow to cool thoroughly; place into a container; leave in a cool place for 7 days, shaking or stirring from time to time.

When you're ready to bake, preheat the oven to 275°F. Measure out the flour, sugar, and softened butter into a large bowl; add the eggs; whisk or beat until everything is blended (no creaming needed). Gradually fold in the fruit mixture until it's evenly distributed.

Pour into an 8-inch square cake tin, greased, and with the base and sides lined with a double thickness of silicone (parchment) paper. Have an extra piece ready (with a 1" hole in the center).

Bake for 3 hours without opening the oven; cover with the vented piece of paper and bake for another hour or until a cake tester tests done. Cool 45-60 min in the tin, then remove. Store only when thoroughly cooled.

Try a nut topping (see photo above) with a clear glaze. You will find this cake is far too rich to ice.

You can also use 2 tins @5.8" square; cook for 2 h then add paper lid; cook 70-100min more.