

Kick Ass Fruitcake

INGREDIENTS

1 cup golden raisins	1 cup unfiltered apple juice
1 cup currants	4 whole cloves, ground
1/2 cup sun dried cranberries	6 allspice berries, ground
1/2 cup sun dried blueberries	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 cup sun dried cherries	1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 cup dried apricots, chopped	1 3/4 cups all purpose flour
Zest of one lemon, chopped coarsely	1 1/2 teaspoons salt
Zest of one orange, chopped coarsely	1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 cup candied ginger, chopped	1 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup gold rum	2 eggs
1 cup sugar	1/4 to 1/2 cup toasted pecans, broken
5 ounces unsalted butter (1 1/4 sticks)	Brandy for basting and/or spritzing

Combine dried fruits, candied ginger and both zests. Add rum and macerate overnight.

Place fruit and liquid in a non-reactive pot with the sugar, butter, apple juice and spices. Bring mixture to a boil stirring often, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and cool for at least 15 minutes.

Preheat oven to 325°. Combine dry ingredients and sift into fruit mixture. Quickly bring batter together with a large wooden spoon, then stir in eggs one at a time until completely integrated, then fold in nuts. Spoon into a 10-inch non-stick loaf pan and bake for 1 hour. Check for doneness by inserting toothpick into the middle of the cake. If it comes out clean, it's done. If not, bake another 10 minutes, and check again.

Remove cake from oven and place on cooling rack. Baste or spritz top with brandy and allow to cool completely before turning out from pan. When cake is completely cooled, seal in a tight sealing, food safe container. Every 2 to 3 days, feel the cake and if dry, spritz with brandy. The cake's flavor will enhance considerably over the next two weeks.