



Low-fat Christmas cake

Cakes made without butter or margarine have a very different texture, probably best described as slightly chewy. They do however taste less greasy and more fruity. This cake benefits from being made at least one week in advance.

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 2 – 2 ½ hours

Makes: approximately 20 slices

Per slice 228 calories / 2.8g fat
(without marzipan or icing)

Ingredients

225g (8oz) no pre-soak prunes, pitted

115g (4oz) cooking apple, grated

175g (6oz) dark muscovado sugar

4 eggs, beaten

1 lemon and 1 orange, zested

175g (6oz) self-rising flour, sifted

1 tbsp mixed spice

50g (2oz) sunflower seeds

225g (8oz) currants

225g (8oz) sultanas

225g (8oz) raisins

115g (4oz) glacé cherries

120ml (4fl oz) brandy

2 tbsps. apricot jam, sieved to glaze

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 170C, 325F, Gas Mark 3. Lightly grease and line a round cake tin (20cm/8in in diameter, 7.5ccc/3in deep) with greaseproof paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl mix together the prunes and apple. Add the sugar, then beat in the eggs a little at a time
3. Press down the mixture to squash the prunes.
4. Mix in the lemon and orange zest, then carefully fold in the flour, spice, sunflower seeds and fruit.
5. Gradually stir in the brandy.
6. Pour the mixture into the prepared cake tin.
7. Using the back of a metal spoon, make a slight dip in the centre to allow for an even top once baked. Bake in the oven for 2 – 2 ½ hours or until a metal skewer inserted into the cake come out clean.
8. Allow to cool on a wire rack, then remove the greaseproof paper.
9. If not icing the cake, glaze by brushing with warmed apricot jam and arrange some cherries or dried fruits on top. Store in an airtight tin.