



Noreen's Kitchen

Fruit Cake Gems

Ingredients

1 cup chopped dates	1 teaspoon ground allspice
1 cup golden raisins	1 teaspoon ground mace
1 cup glace' cherries	1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 cup candied pineapple	1 tablespoon vanilla
2 cups pecan halves	Brandy or Vanilla syrup for soaking
1 cup packed brown sugar	Icing:
1 stick (1/2 cup) butter, softened	3 cups confectioners' sugar
4 eggs	2-3 tablespoons heavy cream or milk
1 cup all-purpose flour	Additional water if needed to thin icing
1 teaspoon salt	1 tablespoon corn syrup
1 teaspoon baking powder	1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon	2-3 drops Fiore De Sicilia
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg	or orange oil (optional)
	Additional Glace' Fruit for decorating
	Additional pecan halves for decorating

Step by Step Instructions

Pre-heat oven to 275 degrees.

Mix together all of the fruits and nuts in a large bowl until they are well blended. Set aside.

Cream together butter and brown sugar in the bowl of your mixer until light and fluffy.

Add in eggs one at a time until fully incorporated and smooth.

Add flour, baking powder and salt and mix to combine.

Add in spices and blend well.

Add fruit and nut mixture and stir just until the batter has coated everything.

Prepare 3 cupcake pans with liners.

Pour batter into each well and press down and even out well. You will only be able to bake 2 pans at one time.

Place a pan of water on the lower rack of the oven. Place cake on the rack above the pan of water.

Bake for 30 to 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean.

Remove from oven and transfer to a cooling rack. Allow cake to cool completely in the pan before removing.

Brush cake with 1/2 cup of either brandy, bourbon or vanilla syrup while still warm and allow it to soak in.

Allow fruit cake gems to cool completely before glazing and decorating if desired. You can leave them plain. They will still be delicious.

To prepare icing glaze, blend confectioners' sugar with 2 tablespoons of cream and 1 tablespoon of corn syrup as well as the Fiore de Sicilia or orange oil if desired and mix well. If too thick add water until the desired consistency is reached. This glaze should be opaque white and thick.

Dollop a small spoonful of glaze on top of each fruit cake gem. Decorate with pecan halves and glaze green and red cherries to resemble holly leaves and berries.

Allow glaze to dry before storing in an airtight container for up to three weeks.

To give, be sure to place each gem inside of an additional festive cupcake liner before presenting to friends and family or before serving.

Baking instructions for different size pans:

10 inch Tube Pan: Mix batter as instructed above. Place pan of water on rack below cake.

Pour batter into a 10-inch tube pan that has been liberally prepared with cooking spray and press down and even out. Bake for 90 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean.

Remove from oven and loosen the cake from the edges of the pan with a sharp knife. Allow cake to cool completely in the pan before removing. Brush cake with 1/2 cup of either brandy, bourbon or vanilla syrup and allow it to soak in.

Store cake in an airtight container until ready to serve or share.

Mini cupcake tins: Bake as above with water on rack below the pans for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean and free of batter. Remove from oven, cool completely. Ice and decorate if desired:

2 Standard 9x4 loaf pans: Bake as above with water on rack below. Line loaf pans with parchment that over hangs each long side by a few inches.

Divide batter between the two loaf pans. Spread evenly. Bake for 75 to 90 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean and free of batter.

Remove from oven and allow to cool in the pan completely. Loosen ends with a knife and use parchment to assist in removing from pan. Ice and decorate if desired. Store in a cool dry place in an airtight container or tightly wrapped in cling film.