

Rich Eggless Boiled Fruit Cake(s) (a good “last minute” Christmas Cake):

This Recipe is a good “last minute” standby for Christmas, if some preparation is done beforehand. The “*Secret to Success*” is to start soaking the mixed fruits, sugar, and spices and brandy or other alcohol, for up to a week beforehand.

“Boiled” fruit cake this means * heating up the fruits, sugar, spices, vanilla, and alcohol, allowing them to cool and stand (covered). It is best to keep adding some brandy or alcohol of choice to the fruit mixture every day or so.

This Boiled Fruit Cake can be made in large (1 cup size or larger) Muffin tins as well as conventional baking tin:

Ingredients:

750 g mixed dried fruit (I add some dried apricots and prunes also)

(Can also add some shredded or chopped nuts e.g. macadamias or almonds)

½ cup soft dark brown sugar (packed well)

90 g butter (or margarine)

1 cup (150 g) Plain Flour

½ cup Self Raising Flour

½ teaspoon Bicarb Soda

1 teaspoon Mixed Spice

½ cup (60 ml) Sweet sherry, brandy, or rum

1 teaspoon Vanilla Essence

Method:

*Refer to Notes above. The fruit, sugar, spices, and alcohol can be pre-soaked for up to a week before hand.

On the day you are going to cook the cake, *which can be the night before Christmas:*

Combine the Fruits, butter or margarine, and sugar in a large saucepan. This will end up being your mixing bowl for the cake. Stir over medium heat until the butter has fully melted and the sugar dissolved.

Cover, and simmer for 3 minutes. Remove from heat, and stand till fully cooled.

While the fruit mixture is cooling, prepare your tin (or tins): Line a square or round cake tin with two layers of brown paper and greaseproof paper, fully greased. If using muffin tins, make sure the paper rises well above the tins. [I have always made this cake in an 8 inch square tin - approx. 20 cm]

Pre-heat the oven to 160 degrees C. Lower if Fan forced, however for this cake it is better not to use fan forced oven if possible.

Stir the sifted dry ingredients into the cooled mixture. The mixture should be relatively moist and able to be spooned with the wooden spoon and spatula into the cake tin (or tins).

Bake the large cake for about 1 ¾ hours. If using muffin tins, start checking after ¾ of an hour. Place a brown paper bag on top, if the top of the cake starts to get too brown- also turn the oven down 10-20 degrees C if the cake starts getting too brown, before it is has been in the oven for an hour. This is more likely with a fan forced oven.

Check the cake is fully cooked through by inserting a skewer. When nearly cool, brush with a jam glaze. This cake should be quite flat in appearance and very moist. It does not rise very much whilst cooking.
