

Gill's Gourmet Gallery

Christmas Cake by Gill

Ingredients

170g (6 oz) glace cherries
225g (8 oz) currants
225g (8 oz) raisins
225g (8 oz) sultanas
1 orange juice and zest
150ml (5 fl oz) brandy
200g (7 oz) butter
225g (8 oz) brown sugar
225g (8 oz) plain flour
1 teaspoon ground mixed spice
1 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
50g (2 oz) chopped walnuts
4 eggs

Method

Put all your dried fruit into a bowl with the zest and juice of the orange and brandy. Leave overnight to plump up and absorb the alcohol. Grease a square 20cm (8 inch) cake tin. Preheat the oven to 150 C / Gas 2. Cream the butter and sugar. Beat in the eggs. Fold in the flour and spices, then add the fruit mixture and chopped nuts. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin. Bake for 3 hours in the preheated oven. Leave the cake in the tin to cool. Poke holes in the top of the cake with a skewer and spoon over 2 tbsp of brandy. Wrap well in cling film. Feed the cake with 1-2 tbsp brandy every fortnight until you ice it. Don't feed the cake for the final week to give the surface a chance to dry before marzipan and icing.

