

Fruitcake and Stollen – Holiday Dried Fruit Classics

When it came down to deciding on a recipe to share this month, we couldn't decide! Half of us have a strong sweet tooth and love a good fruitcake. The other half of us love the slightly sweet but yeasty German Stollen popular this time of year. We just couldn't decide, so we did both! We give you both Fruitcake and Stollen....because who doesn't love extra delicious baked goods this time of year?!?!?

Ginger-Orange Stollen

Yield: 2 to 4 loaves (24 to 32 servings)

Time: About 6 hours, mostly unattended, plus time to let the Stollen sit before serving

Ingredients:

- 1 cup golden raisins
- 1 cup dried cherries
- 1 cup chopped crystallized ginger
- 1 cup sliced or slivered almonds
- $\frac{3}{8}$ cup orange liqueur (like Grand Marnier or Cointreau)
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups ($3\frac{1}{2}$ sticks) butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk, preferably not skim
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon grated orange zest
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons instant yeast or one $\frac{1}{4}$ -ounce packet active dry yeast
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Oil or butter for greasing the bowl and baking sheet
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups powdered sugar



Directions:

1. Combine the raisins, cherries, crystallized ginger, almonds, and orange liqueur in a medium bowl. Stir to combine, cover, and let sit at room temperature while you make the dough or overnight if time allows.
2. Meanwhile, put 1 cup (2 sticks) of the butter and the milk in a small saucepan over medium-low heat and cook until the butter melts (or combine the butter and milk in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave in 30-second intervals until the butter melts). Combine the flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the sugar, the orange zest, the yeast, 1 teaspoon of the ground ginger, the cardamom, the salt, and the nutmeg in a large bowl. When the butter mixture cools to 100°F —about the same temperature as the inside of your wrist—add it to the flour mixture and stir with the dough-hook attachment of a stand mixer or by hand. Lightly beat together the eggs and vanilla and stir them into the dough.

3. Knead the dough with the dough-hook attachment of a stand mixer or by hand until it feels smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Grease a large bowl (it's fine to use the same one you mixed the dough in), add the dough, and turn it over to coat it lightly with oil or butter. Cover the bowl with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap, put it in a warm place, and let the dough rise for 1½ to 2 hours.

4. Punch down the dough and add the raisin mixture. Knead the dough in the bowl with the dough-hook attachment of a stand mixer or by hand until the fruit, nuts, and ginger are evenly incorporated. (The dough will be sticky.) Grease a baking sheet and shape the dough, as well as you can, into 2 to 4 long, oval loaves on the baking sheet. Cover the baking sheet with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap, put it in a warm place, and let the loaves rise for 1 hour.

5. Heat the oven to 350°F. Uncover the baking sheet and bake until the loaves are golden brown, about 35 minutes (for smaller loaves) to 1 hour (for larger loaves). When the stollen is done, melt the remaining ¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat (or in a microwave-safe bowl in the microwave). Brush the tops and sides of the stollen with the butter while the loaves are still warm. Combine the remaining ¾ cup sugar and 1 teaspoon ground ginger and sprinkle over the stollen. Cool thoroughly. Sprinkle the powdered sugar all over the stollen, pressing lightly to help it stick. Wrap each loaf in foil or plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for at least 1 day before serving.

Recipe courtesy of Slate.com:

http://www.slate.com/blogs/browbeat/2011/12/21/stollen_the_best_christmas_bread_you_re_probably_not_making.html

Everyone's Favorite Fruitcake

Ingredients:

FRUIT-

- 1 1/2 cups diced dried pineapple
- 1 1/2 cups raisins, golden or regular
- 1 cup (4 1/2 ounces) diced dried apricots
- 1 1/2 cups chopped dates
- heaping 1 cup candied red cherries, plus additional for decoration, if desired
- 1/3 cup diced crystallized ginger, optional
- 3/4 cup rum, brandy, apple juice, or cranberry juice

BATTER-

- 1 cup (16 tablespoons) unsalted butter
- 2 cups (15 ounces) dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 4 large eggs
- 3 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 2 tablespoons cocoa, black cocoa preferred; optional, for color
- 1/4 cup golden syrup, boiled cider, or dark corn syrup



1/2 cup apple juice, cranberry juice or water
2 cups chopped, toasted nuts (almonds, pecans, or walnuts)

TOPPING/GLAZE (OPTIONAL)-

Rum, brandy, simple syrup, vanilla syrup, or ginger syrup.

Directions:

1. To prepare the fruit: Combine the fruit with the liquid of your choice in a non-reactive bowl; cover and let rest overnight. Too impatient to wait until tomorrow? Microwave everything for 1 minute (or until it's very hot), cover, and let rest 1 hour.
2. Preheat the oven to 300°F. This recipe makes enough batter for ONE (not all!) of the following: 3 dozen individual (muffin pan) cakes; 16 mini loaves (about 3 3/4" x 2 1/2"); 6 to 8 medium loaves (about 3" x 5"); or 2 standard 9" x 5" loaves. Choose your pans (or combinations), and lightly grease them. If you're making muffin-size cakes in a standard muffin pan, line the pan with muffin papers, and lightly grease the papers.
3. To make the batter: Place the the butter and sugar in a large bowl (at least 6-quart), and beat together until well combined.
4. Beat in the salt, spices, and baking powder. Beat in the eggs one at a time, scraping the bowl after each addition.
5. In a separate bowl whisk together the flour and cocoa.
6. Add the flour mixture and the syrup (or boiled cider) to the mixture in the bowl, beating gently to combine. Stir in the juice or water, then the fruit with any collected liquid, and the nuts. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl, and stir until everything is well combined.
7. Spoon the batter into the pans, filling them about 3/4 full.
8. Bake the cakes on the middle shelf of the oven, as follows: about 60 minutes for the individual cakes; 65 to 70 minutes for the small loaves; 75 minutes for the medium loaves, and 2 hours + 10 to 15 minutes for the 9" x 5" loaves. The cakes are done when a cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean.
9. Remove the cakes from the oven, and brush them with rum or brandy. Or simple syrup, or flavored simple syrup (vanilla, rum-flavored, etc.). If you like just a hint of rum or brandy flavor, add 1 tablespoon of liquor to 3/4 cup vanilla syrup or simple syrup, and brush this mixture on the cakes.
10. When the cakes are completely cool, wrap them tightly in plastic wrap, and store at room temperature for up to 6 to 8 weeks.
11. Yield: 2 large loaves to 3 dozen small cakes, depending on size.

Recipe Courtesy of King Arthur Flour: <http://www.kingarthurfLOUR.com/recipes/everyones-favorite-fruitcake-recipe>