

Alcohol-Free Fruitcake



Ingredients

1 cup	butter, plus a little more for greasing; at room temperature
1 ⅓ cups	sugar
2 ¼ cups	flour
1 tsp	baking powder
1 cup	raisins; dark, golden, or a mix
1 cup	mixed candied cherries, crystallized fruit (papaya, pineapple), or/and dried fruit (apricots, currants); chopped
6	eggs
1	orange OR 1 lemon; washed
½ tsp	cinnamon
1 cup	sliced blanched almonds

Grate the peel from the citrus fruit, making sure not to get any of the bitter white layer; reserve about one tablespoon of zest. Slice orange or lemon in half, then squeeze to obtain about one quarter of a cup of juice and reserve. In a non-reactive bowl, place the raisins and the chopped fruit, then add the juice (photo right, top, from top right, golden raisins, green and red candied cherries, dark raisins, and crystallized papaya). Mix to incorporate (photo, right):



Set aside to allow fruit to soak up all the citrus juice. Separate the egg yolks from the whites, placing the yolks in a small bowl, and the whites in a perfectly clean, large mixing bowl. Reserve yolks. Beat egg whites with a large whisk, preferably using the balloon whisk attachment of an electric mixer, at high speed. Once the egg whites have turned foamy, sprinkle one third of a cup of sugar, without stopping the mixer. Continue beating until the mix is completely white, shiny and firm. Set aside. Place one cup of butter and one cup of sugar in another large mixing bowl; using a spatula or the flat attachment of the electric mixer, beat them together at medium



speed, until the sugar dissolves, and the mix is smooth and fluffy. Continue mixing, adding the reserved egg yolks, one at a time. Once the yolk mix is uniform, reduce speed to low, and incorporate about one quarter of the reserved egg whites. Add zest and cinnamon. Continue mixing at low speed, just until the batter looks uniform. Stop beating and set aside. Sprinkle about one quarter of a cup of flour over the reserved soaked fruit mix; fold gently with a spatula to coat, which will prevent the fruit from sinking to the bottom of the pan during baking. Reserve. Place the rest of the flour in a sifter or fine mesh, and add baking powder. Sift over the batter. Mix to incorporate. Add fruit mix, folding by hand with a spatula. Incorporate the rest of the egg whites, scraping the batter off the wall of the bowl and folding very gently over the whites. The resulting batter should be thick, but airy and shiny. Preheat oven to 350°F (180° C). Grease mould(s) with butter, such as a jellyroll pan, or four small loaf pans (5.75x3 in - 14.6x7.6 cm). Spoon batter onto mould(s), smoothing the surface of the batter flat; tap the bottom to release air bubbles. Arrange sliced almonds on top. Bake in the oven until cake showing under the almonds is golden brown, and a skewer comes clean when inserting in the middle of a mould, between 30 and 50 minutes, depending on the depth (jellyroll would be faster than loaf pans). Remove from oven, waiting until cool before slicing (shown at the top).

