

Ground Almond Fruit Cake

(recipe adapted from the Australian Women's Weekly Celebration Cookbook)

Ingredients

250g seedless dates
100g mixed peel*
50g glacé apricots, cut into pieces*
90g red glacé cherries*
90g green glacé cherries*
80g raisins
250g brazil nuts
185g walnuts
100g ground almonds
½ teaspoon baking powder
3 large (59g) eggs
2 tablespoons (40ml) honey
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons rum



*Note: you could really use any mix of glacé fruits you choose. If you decide not to use the apricots, increase the mixed peel to 150g.

Method

1. Put the dates in a large mixing bowl, checking carefully for pips as you go (as dates are mechanically harvested and processed, some seeds are occasionally missed). Give the dates a quick rinse (they can sometimes be a bit dusty).
2. Add all the remaining fruits, brazil nuts and walnuts and stir well. Add the ground almonds and baking powder and stir to combine.
3. In a small bowl, beat the eggs until thick and creamy, then beat in the honey and vanilla extract. Pour the eggs into the fruit mix and stir well to. Make sure that every piece of fruit and nut is well coated with the batter.
4. Preheat the oven to 150C with fan. Line two bar pans (8cm x 26cm) or five small loaf pans with parchment paper. Divide the mixture evenly between the pans, making sure to work it well into the corners.
5. Bake for about an hour (start checking after 50 minutes), or until the cakes are firm and dark brown. The original recipe specified 1½ to 2 hours, but we've never needed that long in our fan forced oven (although it does run hot). Brush the rum over the hot cakes, then wrap tightly in foil and allow them to cool in their pans overnight.
6. When completely cool, wrap the cakes tightly in foil and store in the fridge until required. The cakes cut well when cold; allow slices to return to room temperature before serving.