



Module 1 - Section 6 - Baking a Fruit Cake

Objective: Bake a rich fruit cake.

In completing each section the user will be able to:

- Correctly weigh, measure, and mix ingredients
- Use the correct amount of cake mix for the baking tin
- Ensure the cake is baked evenly throughout

Assessment of the Module

1. Demonstrate the cleanliness of the workspace and availability of required tools and ingredients
2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the ingredients and baking process
3. Ensure the cake is evenly baked
4. Ensure the cake is properly stored

You will Need:

TOOLS

Oven
Scales
Scraper
Tablespoon
Grater
8" round cake tin (pre-lined and with baking collar)
Sieve

INGREDIENTS

1 tbsp Treacle
1.5 tsp Mixed spice
1 tsp Almond essence
1 Orange fruit
1 Lemon fruit
195g Muscovado sugar
80g Nibbed almonds
200g Plain flour
200g Unsalted butter
4 Medium eggs
400g Currants
140g Raisins
270g Sultanas
315g Cherries

Scotch Whisky or Brandy

Supporting Notes:

Fruit cakes are baked at a lower temperature over a longer period than sponge mixes. Before you start mixing the ingredients, ensure that your oven is switched on to the desired temperature.

Fruit should be thoroughly inspected and washed and rinsed to ensure any stalks or debris have been removed. Glace cherries should be rinsed, thoroughly dried, and mixed with a small amount of flour to prevent them sinking in the mix.

Syrup or treacle should be measured carefully and accurately. Both contain sugar and could upset the recipe balance if not measured accurately.

Lemon/orange rinds must be grated carefully, avoiding the white pith, which would add a bitter flavour to the mix.

All nuts, if used, should be chopped or ground, and the cake carefully labelled for allergens. Nuts can give an added flavour to fruit cakes and contribute to the moistness, whilst retaining quality.

As with our Madeira and chocolate cakes, the butter and eggs must be at room temp, to bring the mix together.

When all the ingredients are mixed together, they should be placed in a lined baking tin, wrapped in a baking collar. This ensures that the heat is evenly distributed and reduces the chance of burning the outside edge.

It is important to ensure the cake is baked throughout before removing from the oven. You will see in Paul's example the recommended baking time was 2 hours. However, he checked again after 20min then a further 15mins before he was happy it was baked throughout. Once you know the baking times for certain mixes in your oven, this becomes less guesswork. However, when baking for the first couple of times, best to ebb on the side of caution.

After being removed from the oven, rich fruit cakes must be left in the baking tin until cold, then they may be removed slowly and safely from the tin.

Fruit cakes should be baked up to three months in advance to allow the flavours to mature. The fruit cake should be wrapped in greaseproof paper, then tin foil, and placed in an airtight container. Ideally the cake should be stored somewhere cool and dry and away from direct sunlight, so a storeroom would be perfect.

While in storage, you may choose to add some alcohol to the cake on a monthly basis to enrich the flavour, but this comes down to taste preferences.

Make sure to label your cake with the baked date and note any additional alcohol feeds.

Method:

- Pre-heat a fan oven to:
 - Fan assisted 140C (284F)
 - Conventional 160C (320F)
- Mix the butter, sugar, and eggs
- Add the sieved flour, almonds, mixed spice, almond essence, and treacle
- Mix the cleaned raisins, currants, sultanas, and cherries
 - flavour with whisky or brandy
 - Add the zest from the orange and lemon

- Add to the mix slowly to ensure it's all thoroughly mixed through
- Place the mix into the prepared baking tin and bake for 2 hours
- Check to ensure the cake has baked right through (Paul required an extra 35mins)