

Lockdown Baking! December 2020

With Christmas just around the corner, its time to plan our seasonal baking. We have chosen some recipes with a twist on the traditional Christmas fare, which we hope you will enjoy making and eating! Happy Christmas cooking.

Carol, Heather and Mary

Christmas with a Twist

Chocolate Fruit Cake

A delicious moist celebration cake with no need for marzipan and icing

Ingredients

350g prunes, chopped
525g mixed dried fruit
175g butter, softened
175g soft dark sugar
175ml honey
125ml Tia Maria or similar
2 oranges, zest + juice
1 tsp mixed spice
4 tbsp cocoa powder
3 eggs, beaten
150g plain flour
75g ground almonds
½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda



Method:

1. Heat the oven to 150°C/fan 130°C Gas 2
2. Use double baking paper to line base & sides of 20cm round cake tin
3. Put fruit, butter, sugar, honey, Tia Maria, spice, cocoa, orange juice & zest into a large saucepan. Heat gently until boiling and simmer for 10 minutes, then cool for 30 minutes
4. Mix in the beaten eggs, flour, ground almonds, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda
5. Pour the mixture into the lined tin, smooth the top
6. Bake for 1 ¾ - 2 hours until cake is firm but looks shiny on top, cake may show just a slight stickiness when tested with a skewer
7. Leave to cool in the tin, then store cake wrapped in greaseproof and foil
8. Decorate with edible glitter, mini balls and gold stars
9. Tie a ribbon round the sides

The cake will keep well in an airtight container

Mince Pie Cookies

Tasty cookies with a softer centre

Ingredients:

250g soft butter
140g sugar
1 egg yolk
zest of 1 orange
300g flour
410g jar mincemeat
1 tsp mixed spice few flaked almonds

Method:

1. Line 2 baking trays with greaseproof paper, grease
2. Beat the butter and sugar together until light, beat in the egg yolk
3. Mix in orange zest, flour and most of the mincemeat until it forms a dough
4. Roll into a log shape and chill to firm up. *Wrap in cling film*
5. Cut off slices and place on baking tray, shape to a flat disc
6. Dot a little of the reserved mincemeat and top with flaked almonds
7. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes or until golden but a little doughy in the centre
8. Cool and enjoy



Pecan Tassies

An alternative to mince pies

Ingredients:

For the pastry

50g pecans
50g butter softened
50g full-fat soft cheese
50g plain flour, plus extra for dusting

For the filling:

85g pecans
1 egg yoke
2 tbsp maple syrup
1 tbsp butter, melted
50g light brown sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract

Method:

1. Heat oven to 180°C/160°C Fan, Gas 4
2. To make the pastry, Whizz the pecans in a food processor until finely ground, then pulse in the remaining ingredients with a pinch of salt until the dough comes together
3. together
4. Lightly flour your hands to prevent sticking, then roll the dough into 12 small balls
5. Use your fingers to gently press them into the bottom and up sides of a 12 hole mini muffin tin
6. Chill in the fridge while you make the filling
7. Toast the pecans in a dry frying pan for 3-5 minutes until lightly toasted and smelling aromatic
8. Cool a little
9. Reserve 12 of them, then roughly chop the rest
10. Whisk the remaining ingredients with a pinch of salt, then stir in chopped pecans
11. Bake the pastry cases for 5 minutes, then remove them from the oven. If pastry has puffed up gently press down
12. Spoon 1-2tsp of filling into the pastry cases, then top each with a whole pecan
13. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until crust turns golden and filling is set
14. Leave to cool a little in tin
Eat warm on their own, or with cream whipped up with maple syrup



Vegetarian Tomato Loaf

The Dorrell's Christmas Dinner

Ingredients:

1 large onion
Corn oil
4oz tomatoes
1tsp Marmite
1tsp mixed herbs (dried)
2oz oats
2oz wholemeal breadcrumbs
2 eggs
4oz grated cheese
seasoning

Method:

1. Heat oven to 200°C/400°F Gas mark 6
2. Peel and chop onion, cook in oil until tender
3. Skin and chop the tomatoes, stir into the onions
4. Mix in Marmite, herbs, oats, breadcrumbs and seasoning
5. Beat together the eggs and cheese
6. Stir into other ingredients
7. Bake in a deep roasting tin or pyrex dish for 35-45 minutes

