



EDWARDIAN CHRISTMAS LOAF CAKE

Gâteau de Noël Édouardien aux Fruits et Thé

Source: The Gilded Table – December Edition

Prep Time: 20 minutes (+ 30 minutes soaking)

Cook Time: 50–60 minutes | Yield: 1 loaf (8–10 thin slices)

Recipe Description

This Edwardian Christmas loaf is a quiet, comforting cake — gently spiced, studded with dried fruit, and softened with strong black tea and orange zest. Unlike heavier Victorian puddings, this loaf is tender and refined, meant for slicing thin and serving at the tea table. It improves with time, making it a perfect make-ahead treat for the holiday season.

Ingredients

Fruit Mixture

- 1 cup mixed dried fruit (currants, raisins, chopped dates or figs)
- Zest of 1 orange
- ½ cup strong brewed black tea, cooled

Dry Ingredients

- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Wet Ingredients

- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup milk

To Finish

- Powdered sugar, for dusting



Instructions

1. Soak the fruit

In a bowl, combine the dried fruit, orange zest, and cooled tea. Stir well and set aside for about 30 minutes to soften.

2. Prepare the pan

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a loaf tin and line with parchment paper.

3. Mix the dry ingredients

In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, spices, and salt.

4. Cream butter and sugar

In a separate bowl, beat the butter and brown sugar until soft and pale. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition.

5. Combine the batter

Add the dry ingredients to the butter mixture alternately with the milk, mixing gently. Fold in the soaked fruit along with any remaining tea.

6. Bake

Pour the batter into the prepared loaf tin and smooth the top.

Bake for 50–60 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean.

7. Cool and finish

Allow the loaf to cool completely in the tin. Just before serving, dust lightly with powdered sugar.

Notes

- Slice thinly for a traditional tea-table presentation
- Best enjoyed with tea or mulled wine
- Flavor improves after a day of resting
- Keeps well for several days when wrapped