White Fruitcake

Ingredients:

- 3 cups all purpose flour, spoon & leveled
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup milk or wine (I use milk)
- 4 eggs
- 8 ounces red candied cherries, divided
- 8 ounces green candied cherries
- 8 ounces candied pineapple, cut in half lengthwise
- 4 cups coarsely chopped pecans
- 1 1/2 cups golden baking raisins
- 20 pecan halves for decorating the top of cake
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup sweet or semi-sweet or sweet wine for soaking the top of cake.

Directions:

Preheat oven to 275 degrees. Place oven rack in the lowest position.

Butter or grease the bottom of an angel food or tube cake pan. Line the pan with either parchment paper or a piece of brown paper bag. Butter or grease the top of the paper round. See pictures and instructions above recipe.

From the 8 ounces each of red and green cherries, pick out and set aside, 10 each of the best green and red cherries to use for decorating the top of the cake. Cut the remaining cherries, along with the pineapple in half and set aside with the 20 pecan halves.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt and set aside.

Place the butter and sugar in a large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, or use a hand mixer. Mix on medium high speed for at least 2 minutes until the mixture is light smooth and creamy. (It will no longer have a gritty sugary appearance). Add the eggs , one at a time, and mix to thoroughly incorporate. Add the dry ingredients and milk alternately, beginning and ending

with the dry ingredients. Stop mixing just before the last addition of dry ingredients are totally incorporated. You'll see some little streaks of flour in the mixture.

Using a wooden spoon, add the candied fruit and mix to incorporate. Batter will be very thick and hard to mix. Do not over mix. Add the pecans and mix again, followed by the golden raisins.

Spoon about 1/2 of the batter into the cake pan and use a spoon or spatula to smooth out the thick batter. Spoon the remaining batter into the pan and smooth the batter out again.

Place the decorative cherries and pecans on the top of the batter, arranging them carefully. See picture above recipe.

Bake cake for at least 2 1/2 hours before checking it. Using a long wooden or metal skewer that will go all the way through the cake to check it for doneness. Do not remove the cake from the oven until it is golden brown on top and the skewer comes out clean with no sticky doughy crumbs on it. Ovens vary! Your cake could take anywhere from 2 1/2 to 4 hours, depending on your oven. Mine took 4 hours.

Remove the cake from the oven and allow it to rest for about 20 minutes. Run a sharp knife around the sides of the cake. Gently invert the cake onto a wire rack, place another rack on top of the cake, and gently flip the cake over onto the second wire rack. The top of the cake should be facing upward. Allow the cake to completey cool. It's important to not leave this cake in the pan overnight or it will become soggy.

Once the cake has completely cooled, place a piece of thin white cloth or cheesecloth over the cheesecake. Drizzle 1/2 cup of wine over the cloth. Wrap the cake tightly in foil and place in an airtight container or in a pot with a lid. See pictures above.

Check the cake at the end of the third week. If the cake seems slightly moist leave it alone. If it seems dry to the touch, add about 1/8 cup more of the wine to the cheesecloth. You don't want to add too much! If it's extemely dry add up to 1/4 cup, but no more or the cake will become soggy later. I've never added more than the 1/8 cup.

Keep leftover cake in an airtight container. For the freshest cake, eat within 5 days.

NOTES

This cake freezes beautifully. I wrap and freeze individual pieces and remove one at a time later, when I'm in the mood for a piece.