

Lighter Christmas Cake With Apple & Fruit

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cup pitted dates, chopped
- 3 cups applesauce
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 2 cups raisins
- 2 cups mixed candied fruit, chopped
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp orange zest

Glaze:

- 1/4 cup apricot preserves
- 1/4 cup water
- whole pecans for garnishing



Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F and grease three 8 x 4 x 3-inch loaf pans.

Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, until incorporated; stir in vanilla and applesauce.

Add the walnuts, pecans, raisins, candied fruit, salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, baking powder, baking soda, flour, and orange zest. Mix until just incorporated and no visible signs of flour remain. Transfer batter to prepared loaf pans.

Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Transfer to a rack to cool for 15 to 20 minutes in the pan. Then invert the cake onto a metal rack to cool completely.

For the Glaze: Just before serving, combine the apricot preserves and water in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer, stirring until the glaze has thinned and is shiny. Brush the tops of the cakes with the glaze and garnish with whole pecans.

NOTES:

Storage:

Once the Christmas Cake is completely cool, wrap it in plastic wrap and store it in the refrigerator.

Serving:

A serrated knife works best for slicing the cake. Serve on its own or spread with salted butter.