

Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Fruitcake Tips & Storage



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Tips & Ingredient Notes

- The color may be lighter brown or a darker brown – it all depends on the dates that you get. It has nothing to do with the actual bake on the cake.
- Mixing the batter together with your (clean) hands is honestly the easiest way to get everything blended properly.
- Don't chop the pecans in a food processor. I tried that and it makes them too small. Just coarsely chop them with a knife.
- The pan of water on the rack beneath the fruit cake in the oven is important. Don't skip it!
- All-purpose flour is what creates the batter that holds this together.
- Baking powder is one ingredient that I add because mom always did – but honestly I have no idea what it does here.
- Salt helps to balance the sweetness of all the candied fruit.
- Vanilla adds a rich dimension.
- Large eggs work with the flour to create the batter.
- Candied Pineapple chunks are called for but sometimes I haven't been able to find it and used the rings instead. Just cut them in chunks. Red and green are the most festive if you can find them.
- Candied cherries are usually pretty easy to find. If you can use part red ones and part green ones it's prettier.
- Pitted dates are what makes this cake sweet and sticky. I prefer to get the diced dates but you can get pitted whole dates and dice them yourself.

Storage

Fruitcake stores really well at room temperature if it's wrapped in plastic wrap. I usually leave the parchment wrapped around it and then wrap it in a layer of plastic wrap or aluminum foil

It's fine for a month or so at room temperature, up to 6 months in the fridge, and for an eternity in the freezer.

Faqs

CAN YOU MAKE THIS RECIPE AHEAD OF TIME?:

You can make in November and let it sit in a cool place or make it closer to Christmas..either way it will be great.

IS THIS RECIPE HEALTHY?

Short answer: nope. Fruit cake is high in calories and sugar so you probably shouldn't make a habit of having it for breakfast. Generally it's considered a holiday treat so whether or not it's healthy isn't usually a concern.

CAN YOU SHIP FRUITCAKE?

Yes. This Christmas cake was mailed overseas to my uncles during World War II ... it has been mailed overseas to my kids in the military. It always arrives perfectly intact and fresh.

HOW DO YOU KEEP A FRUITCAKE MOIST?

This traditional fruit cake recipe is moist because of the baking technique and we've eaten the last few bites of it a month or so after making it - it's not dry. Just keep it wrapped. Some people wrap it in a cheesecloth that's been soaked in rum or brandy - and that's a good way to ensure it doesn't mold if you are storing it at room temperature for a long time

Why is fruitcake a holiday tradition?

Fruitcake dates to ancient times when the Romans ate a satura cake, a mixture of barley mash, raisins, nuts, pomegranate, and wine.

Over time it evolved into fruitcake - with the candied fruit added to help preserve the finished cake during a season when fruit was not normally available.

It was popular in Victorian England, where it was called a "Christmas Cake" and the tradition was brought to the United States.

Fruitcakes were used as wedding cakes during Victorian times, as a matter of fact, partly because they could be made well ahead of time.