

Receipts, &c.

CAKES, PLUM-PUDDINGS, MINCE-MEAT, ETC.

FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

A Few Hints Respecting the Making and Baking of Cakes.

Eggs should always be broken into a cup, the whites and yolks separated, and they should always be strained. Breaking the eggs thus, the bad ones may be easily rejected without spoiling the others, and so cause no waste. As eggs are used instead of yeast, they should be very thoroughly whisked; they are generally sufficiently beaten when thick enough to carry the drop that falls from the whisk.

LOAF SUGAR should be well pounded, then sifted through a fine sieve.

CURRENTS should be nicely washed, picked, dried in a cloth, and then carefully examined, that no pieces of grit or stone may be left amongst them. They should then be laid on a dish before the fire, to become thoroughly dry; as, if added to the other damp ingredients, cakes will be liable to be heavy.

GOOD BUTTER should always be used in the manufacture of cakes; and if beaten to a cream, it saves much time and labor to warm, but not melt, it before beating.

Less butter and eggs are required for cakes when yeast is mixed with the other ingredients.

The heat of the oven is of great importance, especially for large cakes. If the heat be not tolerably fierce, the butter will not rise. If the oven is too quick, and there is any danger of the cake burning or catching, put a sheet of clean paper over the top. Newspaper, or paper that has been printed on, should never be used for this purpose.

To know when a cake is sufficiently baked, plunge a clean knife into the middle of it; draw it quickly out, and if it looks in the least sticky, put the cake back, and close the oven door until the cake is done.

PLUM-CAKE, RICH POUND-CAKE, TWELFTH, OR BRIDE-CAKES.—The following table will give the ingredients necessary for cakes of different sizes:—

Ingredients.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	lb. oz.	lb. oz.	lb. oz.	lb. oz.	lb. oz.	lb. oz.
Butter.....	0 12	0 13	1 1	1 4	1 6	2 1
Sugar.....	0 7	0 8	0 10	0 12	1 0	1 6
Currants.....	1 4	1 6	1 10	2 0	2 8	3 12
Orange, lemon, and citron (mixed)...	0 6	0 7	0 8	0 10	0 12	1 2
Almonds.....	0 1 1/2	0 2	0 2	0 3	0 3	0 4
Mixed spice*.....	0 0 1/2	0 0 1/2	0 0 1/2	0 0 1/2	1 0	1 1/2
Flour.....	0 11	0 13	1 1	1 4	1 6	2 1
Eggs (number).....	6	7	9	10	12	13
Brandy, or brandy and wine...}	Wineglassful		4 pt.			

These proportions allow for the cake being iced. If more sugar is preferred, the quantity must be the same as the butter; but less is used in this instance, that the cake may be light, and also to allow for the fruit, which would make it too sweet. Double the quantity of almonds may be used if required, as some persons prefer more. Warm a smooth pan, large enough for the mixture; put in the butter, and reduce it to a fine cream, by working it about the pan with your hand. In summer the pan need not be warmed, as it can be reduced to a cream without; but in winter keep the mixture as warm as possible, without oiling the butter. Add the sugar and mix it well with butter, until it becomes white and feels light in the hand. Break in two or three eggs at a time, and work the mix-

* Nutmegs, mace, and cinnamon, of each equal parts, in powder.

ture well, before any more is added. Continue doing this until they are all used and it becomes light; then add the spirit, currants, peel, spice, and almonds, some or most of these being previously cut in thin slices, the peel having also been cut into small thin strips and bits. When these are incorporated, mix in the flour lightly; put it in a hoop with paper over the bottom and round the sides, and placed on a baking-plate. Large cakes require three or four pieces of stiff paper round the sides; and if the cake is very large, a pipe or funnel, made either of stiff paper or tin, and well buttered, should be put in the centre, and the mixture placed round it; this is to allow the middle of the cake to be well baked, otherwise the edge would be burnt two or three inches deep before it could be properly done. Place the tin plates containing the cake on another, the surface of which is covered an inch or two thick with sawdust or fine ashes to protect the bottom. Bake it in an oven at a moderate heat. The time required to bake it will depend on the state of the oven and the size of the cake. A large cake in an oven of a proper heat will take from four to five hours. When the cake is cold, proceed to ice it. Wedding cakes have generally, first, a coating on the top of almond icing; when this is dry, the sides and top are covered with royal or white icing. Fix on any gum paste or other ornaments whilst it is wet; and when dry, ornament it with piping, orange-blossoms, ribbon, etc.; the surface and sides are often covered with small knobs of white sugar candy whilst the icing is wet. Twelfth-cakes are iced with white or colored icing, and decorated with gum paste, plaster ornaments, piping-paste, rings, knots, and fancy papers, etc., and piped.

UNRIVALLED PLUM-PUDDING.—Two and a half pounds of raisins, one and three-quarters of a pound of currants, two pounds of the finest moist sugar, two pounds of bread-crums, sixteen eggs, two pounds of finely-chopped suet, six ounces of mixed candied peel, the rind of two lemons, one ounce of ground nutmeg, one ounce of ground cinnamon, half an ounce of pounded bitter almonds, quarter of a pint of brandy. Stone and cut up the raisins, but do not chop them; wash and dry the currants, and cut the candied peel into thin slices. Mix all the dry ingredients well together, and moisten them with the eggs, which should be well beaten and strained; then stir in the brandy, and, when all is thoroughly mixed, well butter and flour a stout new pudding cloth; put in the pudding, tie it down very tightly and closely, boil from six to eight hours, and serve with brandy sauce. This quantity may be divided and boiled in buttered moulds. For small families this is the most desirable way, as the above will be found to make a pudding of large dimensions.

CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDING.—A pound of suet, cut in pieces not too fine, a pound of currants, and a pound of raisins stoned, four eggs, half a grated nutmeg, an ounce of citron and lemon-peel, shred fine, a teaspoonful of beaten ginger, half a pound of bread-crums, half a pound of flour, and a pint of milk; beat the eggs first, add half the milk, beat them together, and by degrees stir in the flour, then the suet, spice, and fruit, and as much milk as will mix it together very thick; then take a clean cloth, dip in boiling water, and squeeze dry. While the water is boiling fast, put in your pudding, which should boil at least five hours.

Another way.—Seven ounces raisins, seeded and a little chopped; seven ounces currants, well washed and picked; one and a half ounce citron; three ounces of beef suet, chopped very fine; three-quarters of a nutmeg, grated; one-quarter of a teaspoonful of cinnamon; five

eggs well beaten up; four tablespoonfuls of sugar; five tablespoonfuls of wheat flour; half a lemon-peel, grated; one glass of brandy and one glass of Madeira; a little milk to mix, sufficient to make rather a thick batter. The whole must be well mixed. The above mixture to be put into a well-buttered basin. Tie a pudding cloth over, and pin the four corners over the top. Put into boiling water, and to be kept boiling without ceasing for five hours. We have tried this receipt, and know it to be excellent.

GERMAN SUGAR CAKES.—Blend well with the fingers six ounces of good butter with one pound of fine flour, working it quite into crumbs; add a few grains of salt, one pound of dry sifted sugar, a tablespoonful of the best cinnamon in very fine powder, and a large teaspoonful of mixed spices; to these, the grated rinds of three sound, fresh lemons can be added, or not, at pleasure. Make these ingredients into a paste, with the yolks of five eggs, and about four tablespoonfuls of white wine, or with one or two more in addition, if required, as this must be regulated by the size of the eggs; half of very thick cream, and half of wine, are sometimes used for them. Roll the mixture into balls, flatten them to something less than three-quarters of an inch thick, and bake them in a moderate oven for fifteen to twenty minutes. Loosen them from the baking sheets, which should be slightly floured before they are laid on, by passing a knife under them, turn them over, and when they are quite cold, stow them in a dry, close-shutting canister. The Germans make three incisions in the top of each cake with the point of a knife, and lay spikes of split almonds in them.

COMMON CRULLERS OR TWIST CAKES.—Mix well together half a pint of sour milk, or buttermilk, two teacupfuls of sugar, one teacupful of butter, and three eggs, well-beaten; add to this a teaspoonful of saleratus dissolved in hot water, a teaspoonful of salt, half a nutmeg grated, and a teaspoonful of powdered cinnamon; sift in flour enough to make a smooth dough; roll it out not quite a quarter of an inch thick; cut in small oblong pieces; divide one end in three or four parts like fingers, and twist or plait them over each other. Fry them in boiling lard. These cakes may be cut in strips, and the ends joined, to make a ring, or in any other shape.

SHREWSBURY CAKES.—For rich cakes, one pound of flour, ten ounces of finely-powdered loaf-sugar, ten ounces of butter, half a nutmeg grated, the same quantity of ground cinnamon, and two eggs. For common ones, twelve ounces of flour, four ounces of butter, four ounces of powdered loaf-sugar, one egg, with sufficient milk to make a paste. A few caraway seeds are sometimes added. Mix both these preparations by rubbing the butter in with the flour until reduced to small crumbs; make a hollow, into which put the sugar, eggs, milk, and spice. Make the whole into a moderately firm paste, roll it out on an even board until about one-eighth of an inch in thickness. Cut them out with a plain round cutter; place them in rows nearly touching each other on clean baking-sheets, first slightly rubbed over with butter. Bake them in a cool oven. As soon as the edges are a little colored, they are done.

A GOOD POUND-CAKE.—Beat one pound of butter to a cream, and mix with it the whites and yolks of eight eggs beaten apart. Have ready, warm by the fire, one pound of flour, and the same of sifted sugar; mix them and a few cloves, a little nutmeg and cinnamon, in fine powder together; then by degrees work the dry ingredients into the butter and eggs. When well beaten, add a glass of wine and some caraways. It must be beaten

a full hour. Butter a pan, and bake it an hour in a quick oven.

The above proportions, leaving out four ounces of the butter, and the same of sugar, make a less luscious cake, and to most tastes a more pleasant one.

HOLIDAY CAKES.—Two and a half pounds of flour, two pounds of currants, two pounds of butter, half a pound of moist sugar, half an ounce of pounded spice, four yolks and two whites of eggs, two glasses of brandy, a tablespoonful of yeast, and a little warm water. Rub the butter into the flour, mix all together, and put it before the fire to rise for about an hour. Then make it into cakes about half an inch thick or a little more, and the size of a pudding plate. Bake them not too quickly.

FRENCH JUMBLES.—One pound and a half of flour, one pound of sugar, three-quarters of a pound of butter, three eggs; dissolve one teaspoonful of soda in one-half cup of milk; add this, also one nutmeg, and roll out the dough, and cut into small cakes of any shape, and bake them in a quick oven.

CROSS BUNS.—Rub four ounces of butter into two pounds of flour, and four ounces of sugar. Put into a cup of yeast a spoonful or two of milk, and mix; then add to the ingredients with as much more milk as may be required to make them into a light paste, putting in an ounce and a half of ground allspice, cinnamon, and mace. Make this paste into buns, and place them before the fire to rise. When this process is about half accomplished, press the form of a cross in the centre of each bun with a mould. They must be quickly baked.

CREAM PIE (fine).—Half pound of butter, four eggs, sugar, salt, and nutmeg to your taste, and two tablespoonfuls of arrowroot wet; pour on it a quart of boiling milk, and stir the whole together. To be baked in deep dishes.

CURRENT BUNS.—Mix well together one ounce of sweet yeast with a pint of new warm milk, and add as much flour as will form a thickish batter, well mixing it in. Throw a double or thick cloth over the pan, and let it stand where the warmth of the fire will reach it without heating. When perfectly risen, which will take perhaps an hour and a half or two hours, and which may be ascertained by bubbles appearing on the top, add a little salt, pounded sugar, and flour sufficient to form it into a light dough, currants, caraways, nutmeg, or other spices being thrown in at discretion. Let it stand some time to rise again, beat it up with a spoon, and put it into cups or tin pans slightly buttered for baking. The oven should be a quick one, and the buns be baked until the outside becomes well browned. To make a richer kind less milk should be used and two or three ounces of butter, crumbled up finely in the flour, added to the batter after the first rising.

SEED CAKE.—Beat one pound of butter to a cream, adding gradually a quarter of a pound of sifted sugar, beating both together; have ready the yolks of eighteen eggs, and the whites of ten, beaten separately; mix in the whites first, and then the yolks, and beat the whole for ten minutes; add two grated nutmegs, one pound and a half of flour, and mix them very gradually with the other ingredients; when the oven is ready, beat in three ounces of picked caraway seeds.

GINGER SPONGE-CAKE.—One cup of molasses, one cup of butter, two cups of sugar, four eggs, three cups of flour, one cup of milk, soda, and ginger.

QUEEN CAKE.—Mix one pound of dried flour, the same of sifted sugar and of washed currants; wash one pound

of butter in rose-water, beat it well, then mix with it eight eggs, yolks and whites beaten separately, and put in the dry ingredients by degrees; beat the whole an hour; butter little tins, teacups, or saucers, filling them only half full; sift a little fine sugar over just as you put them into the oven.

LEMON CAKE.—Beat six eggs, the yolks and whites separately, till in a solid froth; add to the yolks the grated rind of a fine lemon and six ounces of sugar dried and sifted; beat this a quarter of an hour; shake in with the left hand six ounces of dried flour; then add the whites of the eggs and the juice of the lemon; when these are well beaten in, put it immediately into tins, and bake it about an hour in a moderately hot oven.

MINCEMEAT.—Six pounds of currants, three pounds of raisins stoned, three pounds of apples chopped fine, four pounds of suet, two pounds of sugar, two pounds of beef, the peel and juice of two lemons, a pint of sweet wine, a quarter of a pint of brandy, half an ounce of mixed spice. Press the whole into a deep pan when well mixed.

Another way.—Two pounds of raisins, three pounds of currants, three pounds of beef-suet, two pounds of moist sugar, two ounces of citron, one ounce of orange-peel, one small nutmeg, one pottle of apples chopped fine, the rind of two lemons and juice of one, half a pint of brandy; mix well together. This should be made a little time before wanted for use.

MISCELLANEOUS COOKING.

TONGUE TOAST.—Take cold tongue that has been well boiled, mince it fine, mix it with cream, or a little milk, if there is no cream at hand; add the beaten yolk of an egg, and give it a simmer over the fire. Toast nicely some thin slices of stale bread, and having buttered them, lay them in a flat dish that has been heated before the fire; then cover each slice with the tongue mixture, which should be kept quite hot, and serve up immediately.

ROAST VEAL AND CHICKEN BONES make a very nice soup, boiled with vegetables; but add a handful of macaroni, break it up fine, and boil the soup half an hour after it is put in. Color the soup with a little soy or ketchup.

CALF'S HEAD SOUP.—Procure a calf's head, wash it well, and let it stand in salt and water two or three hours; then soak it in fresh water. Put it on to boil, and when the meat will separate from the bone, take it off. Strain the broth; cut the meat in small pieces, and add it to the broth. Then season with sweet marjoram, sage, thyme, sweet basil, pepper, salt, mace, and cloves. Take one pound of suet, and two pounds of veal, chopped fine, and with sufficient bread crumbs and seasoning as above, make some forcemeat balls, and fry them in butter; make also some small dumplings, with a little flour, butter, and water; add the dumplings, the forcemeat balls, two or three eggs, chopped fine, a spoonful of browned flour, and as much wine as you think fit, to the soup.

VERMICELLI SOUP.—Put a shin of veal, one onion, two carrots, two turnips, and a little salt, into four quarts of water. Boil this three hours; add two cups of vermicelli, and boil it an hour and a half longer. Before serving, take out the bone and vegetables.

CONTRIBUTED RECEIPTS.

CURE FOR CHAPPED HANDS.—Take some prepared chalk, scrape it fine; have some fresh lard; blend both together to the consistency of salve. Rub the hands with it before going to bed, and sleep in old kid gloves with the palms

cut out. This preparation will also whiten the hands considerably, and is a certain cure for eruptions of long standing.

M. L.

The following receipt for cleaning gloves has been sent to us. We have not tried it:—

You may clean kid gloves with soap and flannel thus: Put the glove on the hand; moisten the flannel with clean water, rub on the soap, then rub the soiled glove with the flannel, taking care to wash off the dirt as it accumulates on the flannel. When the glove appears clean, rub it with a clean soft towel before removing it from the hand. Take it off and blow into it. Let it dry very gradually, and when dry pull it well out; it will then regain its color, which appears changed in drying.

COOKIES.—One cup of sugar, half cup of butter, half cup of water, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar, one of soda, and a little nutmeg.

It appears to us that the lady has forgotten to say how much flour.

DELICATE CAKE.—One coffee-cup of sugar, two tablespoonfuls of butter (not melted), one teacup of sweet milk, the whites of two eggs (or one whole egg, if you do not want it very delicate), two coffee-cups of flour, one teaspoonful of cream of tartar, half teaspoonful of soda.

EXCELLENT SPONGE CAKE.—Whites of twelve eggs, yolks of ten eggs, one pound of sugar, three-quarters of a pound of flour. Then take out one large tablespoonful and not use; one tablespoonful of vinegar. Flavor with lemon. Stir the flour in lightly.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE CARE OF PIANOS.—It should be remembered that the pianoforte is susceptible of the change of temperature, and when tuned in one temperature will be out of tune in another. Good and well-made pianofortes will stand if they are tuned at proper periods. Many people, as they wish to avoid expense, will let their instruments remain long out of tune, which is a great detriment to them, as they are less likely to stand well after having been so left. A pianoforte ought justly to be tuned twice a year, at least; first when you commence with a fire in your room; second when a fire is discontinued. By following this course you have the best guarantee that the instrument will remain in tune for the longest period of time.

Hops lose all their fine flavor by exposure to the air and damp; they should be kept in a dry, close place, and tightly packed.

HOW TO PURIFY RANCID LARD.—A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman* writes: "We had some forty pounds of rancid lard, which was valueless as it was. Knowing the antiseptic qualities of the chloride of soda, I procured three ounces, which was poured into about a pailful of salt water, and, when hot, the lard added. After boiling thoroughly together for an hour or two, it was set aside to cool. The lard was taken off when nearly cold, and it was subsequently boiled up. The color was restored to an alabaster white, and the lard was as sweet as a rose."

STARCH FOR FINE MUSLINS.—Isinglass is a very delicate starch for fine muslins; also rice. Some add a very little fine salt to starch.

BROWN HOLLAND CHAIR-COVERS.—After being washed clean in the usual manner, they must be rinsed at the last in water in which some hay has been boiled. This will restore the color which has been washed out, and they will have the appearance of new. This is also a good plan for the brown-white crum-cloths and coverings for stair-carpets.