

We Are Nuts presents Fearless Fruitcake by "The Mad Baker" Brian Vinero

Fruit Cake 2

Makes four, small round cakes

Ingredient	Volume	Weight	Notes
Fruit, Nut and Rum Mix:			
We Are Nuts Diced Glazed Fruit	Approximately 2 Cups	1 Pound	
California Raisins	Scant Cup	4 oz	
Chopped Pecans	1 Cup	4 oz	
Dark Rum	1 Cup		
Cake Batter:			
Cake Flour ("dip and sweep" measure*)	2 Cups	9 ounces	I recommend Pillsbury Softasilk or Swans Down brands. Weighing is always better than measuring with flour.
Ground Cinnamon	1 tsp		
Baking Soda	½ tsp		
Salt	1 tsp		
Unsalted Butter, <i>softened at room temp</i>	2 Cups	1 Pound	
Dark Brown Sugar	1 Cup	8 oz	
Milk	½ Cup		
Large Eggs	4		

Plus up to an additional cup of rum (or more) for storage. And don't forget parchment paper and cheesecloth (if using).

*Dip and sweep method for measuring flour: Dip a one-cup measuring cup into container of cake flour. Sweep off the top with the dull side of a knife or spatula.

This recipe requires four, 6-inch by 2-inch round pans.

We Are Nuts presents Fearless Fruitcake by "The Mad Baker" Brian Vinero

Prepare the four pans: Spray the pans with an oil spray such as Pam. Cut two pieces of parchment for each of the four pans: One round that will cover the bottom (these can also be purchased pre-cut at craft stores such as Michael's) and a strip that will cover the sides. The parchment will stick to the cooking spray. Once pans are lined with the paper, give them each another generous spray.

For the Fruit, Nut and Rum Mix: *At least twenty-four hours ahead of baking, but I generally like to do it 2-3 days before baking.* Place the **raisins, candied fruit mix** and **pecans** in bowl. Pour the **rum** over the mix. Use a large spoon to mix it all together. Cover it tightly, as alcohol will dissipate and leave to soak. It is helpful to give it a toss several times a day. After a day, a majority of the liquid will be absorbed; but do not be concerned if there is still some liquid at the bottom.

Set a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 325°.

For the cake batter: In a small bowl whisk the **flour, cinnamon, baking soda** and **salt**. Combine the milk and molasses. Using an electric mixer or by hand, cream together the butter and brown sugar until incorporated and mixture is light and fluffy. Add the eggs to butter-sugar mixture and beat until uniform. Add the dry ingredients in three increments, alternating with the molasses-milk mixture; use low speed if using a mixer. Beat until just incorporated taking a moment to give the bowl a scrape from the bottom to assure everything is mixed. The batter may look a little curdled at this point, do not be concerned. Add the **fruit, nut and rum mixture** and stir to incorporate. When you believe that it is all almost incorporated, take a spatula and scrape all the way down to the bottom and bring it back up to the top to be certain.

Divide batter evenly among the four pans, and smooth over the tops with a small spatula or butter knife. Place the cakes in the oven, taking care not to place them too close to the oven walls or too close to each other.

Bake for 40-45 minutes. Check cakes the first time at the 40-minute mark. And take care not to open the oven door or disturb the cakes while baking, particularly in the first twenty minutes. Top of cake should feel a bit springy, yet solid when lightly touched. A toothpick or bamboo skewer will come out dry, though perhaps with a few moist crumbs clinging to it. And most importantly, it should have just begun to pull away from the sides of the pan.

Cool the cakes in the pan for 30 minutes to an hour. Gently remove cakes from the pans. Remove cakes from parchment, invert so that the top of the cake is up and then transfer to a cooling rack for 1 to 2 hours until completely cool. These cakes will be a bit delicate before cooling, so treat them gingerly.

Prepare for storage: Brush the top and sides of each cake with two additional tablespoons of rum. **OPTIONAL:** Wrap cakes in cheesecloth and brush the cloths lightly with another two tablespoons of rum. Wrap cakes very tightly and thoroughly with plastic wrap, and then place into a covered storage container, frankly, Ziploc bags can also work very well. Put the cakes in a cool, dry place, (such as a storage closet) on a high shelf where they will not get smashed, jostled or devoured. And forget about them until just before Christmas. The cakes are good right out of the oven but will be much better a month later and even better two months later. If you want to give these as gifts, you can find inexpensive, decorative seven-inch tins at a dollar store that fit these cakes perfectly.