

HOLIDAY FRUIT-NUT CAKE

*(from Juanita Neilands:
an old Southern family recipe)*

1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup flour
4 eggs
1 T vanilla
1/2 cup white grape juice
1 t baking powder
1 lb pitted dates, chopped
(or 1/2 lb dates + 1/2 lb mixed dried fruits of your choice)
1/2 lb dried apricots, chopped
1 lb pecans, chopped
3/4 lb walnuts, chopped (about 3 cups)
optional: Tawny Port wine



Beat eggs and sugar together. Add flour and baking powder while beating, then add vanilla and grape juice. Dust dates and apricots with flour, add to the batter, then add the chopped nuts. The batter will seem very dry, do not worry about it.

Prepare six mini-loaf pans by greasing heavily with shortening. Line with 2 layers of parchment paper, greasing each layer. Spoon the batter into each pan, add whole walnuts or pecans on top if you want.

Bake at 350F for 50 minutes to 1 hour. Remove from pan as soon as you can touch the cake. Remove the parchment paper, and put cakes on a rack over a pan. Pour Tawny port over and allow to cool. Add more Port and wrap for storage. Cake can be enjoyed right away or stored for several months, if Port wine (or brandy) is added.