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Mini Christmas Cakes

(Makes 6 mini-loaves)

320g currants

450g sultanas

120g raisins

75g peel

100g glace cherry halves

Rind of 2 lemon

100ml orange juice

375g plain flour

2 teaspoons mixed spice

375g softened butter or margarine

375g brown sugar (dark or light)

5 eggs

30ml/2 tablespoon milk (if needed)

Heat oven to 150C/Gas 2.

Grease and base line 3 mini-loaf tins. Place mini-loaf tins on a baking tray.

In a large bowl mix all the fruit together.

Finely grate just the yellow part off the lemon's skin (zest) and mix with the fruit.

Add the orange juice and mix well. Cover with cling film and leave overnight in a cool room, or for up to 4 days in a refrigerator.

Weigh the flour and sieve into a bowl. Mix in the mixed spice.

Beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Add the eggs one at a time with a little of the flour. Beat until mixed.

Add the remaining flour a little at a time, mixing with a gentle folding action. Finally add the fruit and mix gently. If very stiff add a little milk.

Spoon evenly into the loaf tins, and bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour. The cakes are cooked when well risen and firm to the touch.