

Now, bake the luxury loaves!

A year's worth of goodness seems to be included in every special holiday bread — perhaps because Christmas comes but once a year . . . perhaps because Christmas and baking go so well together!

Here are four such breads to add to your collection of once-a-year luxury loaves . . . Why not bake them now to stay perfect in the freezer, for your holiday guests!

LUXURY MORSEL LOAF

- 1 6-oz. pkg. (1 cup) semi-sweet chocolate morsels
- 2 cups sifted all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter or shortening
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ teaspoon mace or nutmeg
- 1 cup sugar
- 5 eggs
- ¼ cup orange juice
- ¼ cup finely chopped nuts
- Grated rind of one orange

Melt morsels over hot (not boiling) water. Remove from heat. Sift flour, baking powder, salt together; set aside. Combine butter, vanilla and mace or nutmeg; beat until creamy. Gradually beat in sugar; beat in, one at a time, eggs. Stir in melted semi-sweet. Add flour mixture alternately with orange juice. Fold in nuts, orange rind. Pour into foil-lined 10 x 5 x 3-inch pan. Bake in preheated 300° oven, 1 hour 40 minutes.

STOLLEN

- 1 pkg. dry yeast (or 1 cake compressed yeast)
- ¼ cup warm water for dry yeast, lukewarm for compressed
- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup hot scalded milk
- 1 unbeaten egg
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 cup raisins
- ½ cup currants
- ¼ cup candied fruit
- ¼ cup chopped almonds
- 2 tablespoons grated orange rind
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon rind
- 4½ to 5 cups all purpose flour
- Powdered sugar

Soften yeast in water. Melt butter in milk. Add eggs, sugar, salt and cardamom; cool to lukewarm. Stir in raisins, currants, candied fruit, almond, grated rinds and softened yeast. Gradually add flour to form a stiff dough.

Knead on well-floured surface until smooth and satiny, about 5 min. Place in greased bowl. Cover. Let rise (85-90°) until light and doubled, about 1½ hours. Divide into 3 parts; roll each to a 12 x 7-inch rectangle. Lift 12-inch side; fold over to shape loaf as illustrated. Cover.

Let rise until doubled, about 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350°. Bake 20-25 minutes until deep golden brown. While warm, brush with butter; sprinkle with powdered sugar. Makes 3 loaves.

CAN-PAN FRUIT BREAD

(pictured in color on the cover)

Winner, 10th Grand National Bake-Off by Mrs. Hildegard Chamberlain, Cambridge, Massachusetts

- 2 pkgs. dry yeast (or 2 cakes compressed yeast)
- ½ cup warm water (lukewarm for compressed yeast)
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup shortening
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1½ cups hot scalded milk
- 2 beaten eggs
- 2 tablespoons brandy extract or rum extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 7 to 7½ cups all purpose flour
- 1½ cups chopped mixed candied fruit
- ½ cup chopped candied cherries
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup blanched almonds, chopped

Soften yeast in water. In large bowl combine sugar, shortening, salt and milk. Cool to lukewarm. Add eggs, extract, vanilla and yeast. Blend in 4 cups flour; mix thoroughly. Let rise in warm place until doubled, about 1½ hours.

Gradually add 3 to 3½ cups flour to form a stiff dough. Knead on floured surface until smooth and satiny, 5-8 min. Knead in candied fruit, cherries, raisins and almonds. Let rise until doubled, about 1½ hours.

Shape dough as follows: (1) Either divide into 3 parts and shape into round loaves. Place in 3 well greased 8 or 9-inch round layer pans or 3 3-pound shortening cans. (2) Or divide into 6 parts, shape into round loaves; place in 6 well-greased 1-pound coffee cans. Let rise in warm place until dough fills pans and tops of loaves are even with pan edges — about 1 hour.

Bake at 350°. Large loaves — 50-60 min., small loaves, 40-45 min. Remove from cans immediately and brush with beaten egg. If desired, glaze with powdered sugar icing.

CHUNKY DARK FRUIT CAKE

- 3 cups (1 15-oz. pkg.) light or dark raisins
- 2¼ cups (1 lb.) candied cherries
- 4 cups (1 lb.) California walnuts
- 2¼ cups (1 lb.) dates
- 2 cups (1 lb.) candied pineapple
- 1 cup (½ lb.) candied orange peel
- 1 cup (½ lb.) candied lemon peel
- 1 cup (½ lb.) candied citron
- 5 cups sifted all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 2 cups (1 lb.) butter or margarine
- 2½ cups sugar
- 6 eggs
- ¼ cup light molasses
- ½ cup Sherry wine or grape juice

Prepare 1 9-inch tube pan, 1 large loaf pan (about 8½ x 4½ x 2½-inches) and 1 small loaf pan (5½ x 3 x 2-inches) by lining with greased foil.

Rinse and drain raisins. Leave cherries whole, walnuts in large pieces. Pit dates; cut in half. Cut candied pineapple in ¼-inch wedges. Cut remaining fruits small. Mix half the flour with fruits and walnuts. Sift remaining flour with spices, soda and salt. Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in molasses and wine. Blend in flour mixture, then floured fruits, mixing well. Turn into prepared pans.

Bake in 300° oven about 2 to 3 hours with shallow pan filled with hot water in bottom of oven. Cool, then wrap in brandy-soaked cloth; wrap in foil and store in cool place. Makes about 10½ pounds cake.



Luxury Morsel Loaf (upper right) has bits of chocolate, nuts and the tang of orange in every bite!

Stollen (pronounced schtoll-len) is a traditional German Christmas bread, holds currants, almonds, citrus rind, raisins, more!

Chunky Dark Fruit Cake (lower right) holds rich chunks of goodness—cherries, walnuts, candied pineapple, citron, orange and lemon peel!

