

# PERFECT DARK FRUIT CAKE





## PERFECT DARK FRUIT CAKE WITH DRY SHERRY AND BEETROOT

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 5½ hours

Serves: 12-20

1.3kg mixed dried fruits  
1 cup dark rum  
1½ cups plain flour  
1½ cups rye flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
2 Tbsp beetroot powder  
1 Tbsp ground cinnamon  
1 tsp ground nutmeg  
½ tsp ground cloves

½ tsp ground allspice  
250g unsalted butter, at room  
temperature  
450g dark brown sugar  
4 eggs  
2 tsp vanilla paste  
1 tsp almond essence  
1 tsp cinnamon essence  
½ cup molasses  
½ cup lime marmalade

**1 Preheat** oven to 130°C. Combine the fruit and rum in a lidded container, mix well, and refrigerate for 1 week, stirring at least once every day.

**2 Sift** the flours, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, beetroot powder and spices into a large bowl. Combine the butter and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer and beat with the paddle attachment on medium speed for 10 minutes, until very light.

**3 Put** the eggs, vanilla, essences and molasses in a second bowl and whisk until smooth. Add to the butter while beating on low speed. Once smooth, add to the flour bowl and stir thoroughly.

**4 Fold** in the dried fruit and marmalade, then spoon into two lined 23cm cake tins. Bake for 5½ hours, until firm to touch. Cool completely in the tin.

**COOK'S NOTES:** Beetroot powder is both a beautiful rich deep-red colour, and has a delicate earthy flavour. You'll find it in health food stores, or in the nature foods aisle of your supermarket.

