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## Padua Player, The SugaChef

creates his own  
Black Cake Recipe  
based on  
Emily Dickinson's recipe

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A RIFF ON EMILY DICKINSON'S BLACK  
CAKE

BY THE SUGACHEF

MAKES A 9" TUBE CAKE

FOR THE SYRUP

2 cups sugar  
2 cups water  
1/2 cup brandy, or more to taste

FOR THE FRUIT

12 ounces golden raisins  
4 ounces dried raisins  
4 ounces dried apricots, cut into small pieces  
4 ounces pitted dried prunes, cut into pieces  
the size of raisins  
2 ounces dried apples, diced into small pieces  
2 ounces pitted dates, diced into small pieces  
1/4 cup brandy

FOR THE CAKE

1 3/4 cups unbleached all-purpose flour  
2 1/4 teaspoons baking powder  
3/4 teaspoons baking soda  
3/4 teaspoons kosher salt  
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
1 1/4 teaspoons ground cloves  
1 1/2 teaspoons freshly grated nutmeg  
1 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger  
3 sticks unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
1 orange zested and juiced ( use the juice for  
soaking the cake )  
6 large eggs, at room temperature  
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla  
1/4 cup molasses

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For the syrup: Combine the sugar and water in a saucepan over medium-high heat; cook, until the sugar dissolves. Let cool, pour into a container. Stir in the 1/2 cup of brandy, or more (to your taste). Cover and refrigerate.

For the fruit: Toss together the raisins, craisins, apricots, prunes, apples and dates with 1/4 cup brandy in a large bowl, until evenly moistened. Let stand for at least 1 hour, and preferably overnight.

For the cake: Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Grease the 9 inch tube pan with a baking spray.

Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, cardamom and ginger in a mixing bowl.

Beat the butter in the very large bowl (5-quart) of a stand mixer on medium speed, until creamy. Gradually add the sugar, beating until the mixture is light in color and texture. Add the vanilla and orange zest. Add the eggs 1 at a time, beating well each time, scrape the bowl. On medium speed, pour in the molasses. The batter may look curdled, but it's ok.

Gradually add the flour mixture and mix just until combined.



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Drain the fruit and reserve the liquid for soaking the warm cake.

Reserve a few tablespoons of flour and toss with the fruit. Fold into the cake batter, do not over-mix.

Pour the batter into the cake pan Smooth the top. Bake for approximately 30-35 minutes. Using a cake tester or skewer insert it into the center of the cake. If it comes out clean the cake is done. The cake will be very dark on top and slightly sunken. Let the cake cool in the pan.

Use a skewer to poke holes in the cake into the top of the cake. Add the reserved liquid ( and your reserved orange juice) to your brandy syrup. Begin brushing or pouring the brandy syrup evenly over each cake, allow the syrup to soak into the cake. I use about 3/4 cup of the reserved liquid.

Allow the cake to cool completely. Once cooled wrap the cake in plastic wrap.

Place the cake onto a serving platter and serve! You can fill the center with fruit and lightly dust the top with powdered sugar!

