

Spiced Plum Gingerbread Cake

Steeped in Tradition | July/August 2005



- 1/4 CUP SPICED PLUM TEA LEAVES**
- 8 TBSP. (1 STICK) UNSALTED BUTTER**
- 1/2 CUP DARK BROWN SUGAR, FIRMLY PACKED**
- 1/2 CUP FULL-FLAVORED MOLASSES**
- 1/2 CUP LIGHT-COLORED CORN SYRUP**
- 2 1/2 CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR**
- 1 1/2 TSP. GROUND GINGER**
- 1 1/2 TSP. GROUND CINNAMON**
- 1/2 TSP. GROUND CLOVES**
- 1/2 TSP. GROUND NUTMEG**
- 1/4 TSP. SALT**
- 2 EGGS**
- GRATED ZEST OF 1 LEMON**
- 2 TSP. BAKING SODA**
- 1 TBSP. LEMON JUICE**
- 2 CUPS POWDERED SUGAR**

Grease a 10-inch fluted tube pan; set aside.

Bring 2 cups of water to a boil, add the tea, and steep for 5 minutes. Strain, pressing to extract as much liquid as possible. Don't worry if some of the leaves fall through. Melt the butter; stir it together with the brown sugar, molasses, and corn syrup. Set mixture aside to cool.

In the bowl of a food processor combine flour, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and salt; cover and process. Add the butter-sugar mixture; cover and process. Add the eggs and lemon zest and blend until smooth.

Stir the baking soda into 1 cup of the tea. It will be foamy. Stir the mixture into the batter, mixing well, then pour into the prepared pan. Bake in a 350° oven for 40 to 45 minutes or until top is springy and a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool cake in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove cake from pan and cool completely on a wire rack.

Combine 2 tablespoons remaining tea with lemon juice. Sift in powdered sugar; whisk until combined. Add additional tea, 1 teaspoon at a time, until a thick but spreadable icing is achieved. Discard any remaining tea. Pour icing over the cooled gingerbread cake and let set. Makes one 10-inch cake (12 servings).