

Individual Christmas Cakes (makes about 10)

You will need 10 small baked bean or similar cans and wash thoroughly. If the can has had a pull tab on it you will have been left with a small rim at the top, so you need to cut out the bottom of the can with a tin-opener. Turn the can upside down and the loose bottom will now rest inside on the rim, like a normal cake tin. (Be careful as the can bottom is likely to be sharp).

Line and grease each can as you would a normal cake tin using greaseproof paper, making the side paper come up 5cm/2" above the sides of the cans. A pastry brush is handy for greasing.

300g plain flour
1 1/2 teaspoons of baking powder
1/2 teaspoon of salt
1/2 teaspoon of mixed spice
225g margarine or butter
100g brown sugar
100g granulated sugar
1 dessertspoon black treacle
3 eggs
1/2 grated lemon rind and juice
300g mixed fruit
30g chopped cherries
3 tablespoons of milk

1. Sieve the flour, salt, baking powder and spice into a bowl.
2. Cream the margarine and sugar in another bowl.
3. Beat the eggs and add a little at a time to the margarine and sugar.
4. Fold in the flour and then add the fruit, treacle, lemon juice and rind.
5. Add milk if required to give a dropping consistency.
6. Spoon into lined and greased small cans.
7. Cook at 150°C / 200°F / Gas mark 2 for approximately 1 hour.
8. Leave to cool.
9. Decorate with ready to use icing and small cake decorations.