

FRUIT CAKE

250 g (9 oz) softened unsalted butter
230 g (8 oz/1 cup) soft brown sugar
2 teaspoons finely grated orange zest
2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest

4 eggs

250 g (9 oz/2 cups) plain
(all-purpose) flour

60 g (2¼ oz/½ cup) self-raising flour

FRUIT MIX

800 g (1 lb 12 oz) sultanas
(golden raisins)

320 g (11¼ oz) raisins, chopped

185 g (6½ oz/1¼ cups) currants

155 g (5½ oz) glacé cherries,
quartered

250 g (9 oz) pitted prunes, quartered

125 g (4½ oz) mixed peel

250 ml (9 fl oz/1 cup) brandy

55 g (2 oz/¼ cup) soft brown sugar

80 g (2¾ oz) sweet orange
marmalade

1 tablespoon cocoa powder

½ tablespoon ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon ground ginger

1 teaspoon mixed spice

MAKES 1

Preheat the oven to 150°C (300°F/Gas 2). Grease and line a 23 cm (9 inch) round or square cake tin. To make the fruit mix, combine all the ingredients in a bowl.

Beat the butter, soft brown sugar and orange and lemon zests in a bowl with electric beaters until just combined. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Transfer to a bowl and stir in half of the soaked fruit mix alternately with the plain flour and the self-raising flour. Mix well, then spread evenly into the tin and tap the tin on the bench to remove any air bubbles. Dip your fingers in water and level the surface.

Decorate the top of the cake with whole blanched almonds, if desired. Sit the cake on several layers of newspaper on the oven shelf and bake for 3¼–3½ hours, or until a skewer comes out clean. Cover the top with baking paper, seal firmly with foil, then wrap the cake and tin in a clean tea towel (dish towel) and leave to cool.

PREPARATION TIME: 40 MINUTES

COOKING TIME: 3 HOURS 30 MINUTES