



Holiday dried-fruit breads take many forms. I grew up with my mother baking her Norwegian family recipe, Julekake (YOO-leh-ka-ka). This holiday stollen keeps that spirit and takes inspiration from the traditional German holiday bread with its rich dough packed with raisins, cranberries, candied orange peel, and ginger, and holiday spices. Brushed with rum and butter, and with a tender crumb textured with ground almonds, the holiday stollen is excellent sliced and toasted. The smell of these baking takes me right back to my childhood and the aromas that kicked off the festive holiday season at my house.

- Leslie Mackie



INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/4 cup candied ginger, 1/4-inch dice
- 3/4 cup candied orange peel, 1/4-inch dice
- 1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp golden or white rum, divided
- 1/2 cup almonds, roasted and ground fine
- 3/4 cup whole milk, divided
- 1 1/2 tsp active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup + 1 Tbsp granulated sugar, divided
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp cardamom
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp cloves
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1 Tbsp lemon zest (from 1 lemon)
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 6 ounces (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature, divided
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar



DIRECTIONS:

In a medium bowl, combine the cranberries, raisins, candied ginger, orange peel, and 1/4 cup rum. Let marinate for 1 hour or overnight.

In a small bowl, combine the ground almonds and 1/4 cup milk. Let sit for 1 hour to allow the almonds to absorb the milk.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the remaining 1/2 cup milk (lukewarm), yeast, and 1 Tbsp sugar. Fit the paddle attachment and mix for 1 minute, then let stand 2 minutes until slightly foamy.

In a medium bowl, combine the remaining 1/4 cup sugar, flour, cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, allspice, lemon zest, and salt. Sift together with your hands to combine. Set aside.

Add the egg, vanilla, and the almond mixture (do not drain) to the milk mixture. Mix for 1 minute to combine.

Add the flour mixture in three additions, mixing after each until incorporated. Lower the bowl, change the attachment to a dough hook, and mix about 3 minutes to bring the mixture together.

With the mixer on low, add 1 stick of the butter in dime-sized pieces, mixing until fully absorbed. Mix for another 5 minutes, until the dough is elastic and slightly shiny. Let rest 5 minutes. Add the marinated fruit. Mix about 2 minutes to distribute evenly.

Pull the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface. Form into a ball, place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let proof for 2 to 3 hours. The dough will increase in size and feel slightly spongy.

Again, pull the dough onto your slightly floured work surface, and press into a 10-inch square, and divide in half.

For each piece, bring the two shorter sides toward the center. Flatten the right side, then roll the left side into a log and lay it over the right side leaving a 1-inch border. Slightly flatten the rolled side.

Place both loaves on a parchment-lined baking sheet and cover loosely with plastic wrap to prevent them from drying out. Let rise at room temperature until slightly puffy, about 1 hour. Meanwhile, heat the oven to 325°F.

Bake on the center rack for 40 to 45 minutes, until deep golden brown.

Melt the remaining 1/2 stick of butter and stir in the remaining 2 Tbsp rum. Brush the butter mixture over the warm loaves to saturate the crust. Dust generously with powdered sugar. Allow to sit an hour, then dust a second time so that it keeps its white appearance.

Cool completely, then wrap in plastic. Stollen keeps well at room temperature for 2 to 3 weeks. Enjoy toasted slices with jam, butter or honey butter.