

Chocolate Applesauce Spice Cake

2 cups flour	1 cup raisins
$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt	1 cup chopped walnuts
1½ teaspoons baking soda	1 cup unsalted butter
1½ teaspoons baking powder	3 eggs
1½ teaspoons cinnamon	1 cup packed brown sugar
$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground cloves	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon allspice	2 tablespoons strong brewed coffee
1½ teaspoons ginger	2 tablespoons molasses
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cardamom	1½ cups applesauce
Pinch nutmeg	$\frac{2}{3}$ cup buttermilk
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cocoa	

Butter and flour a 9-inch square baking pan. Preheat oven to 350°. Have the butter, the eggs, and the buttermilk at room temperature. Plump the raisins in hot water. Drain and dry them on paper towels. Sprinkle a tiny bit of flour onto the raisins and the nuts, distributing the flour with your hands.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, baking soda, baking powder, cocoa, and all the spices.

Cream the butter well in a mixer. Gradually beat in the white sugar, then the brown sugar until well mixed. Beat in eggs one at a time. On low mixer speed, add the dry ingredients $\frac{1}{2}$ cup at a time. Alternate with the buttermilk, finishing with the dry ingredients.

Add the raisins and the nuts.

Stir together the applesauce, the coffee, and the molasses. Add this mixture to the batter, beating gently until smooth.

Pour into the prepared cake pan. Bake in the middle of the oven for 50- 55 minutes. Cool the pan on a rack, but leave the cake in the pan to serve.

Icing

Cream $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of unsalted butter in a mixer. Gradually sift on and beat in 3 cups of confectioner's sugar. Add 1 tablespoon of vanilla and enough heavy cream to create a spreadable frosting. Frost the cake in the pan.