

Air Fryer Christmas Cake

Description

If you're looking for a quicker, more convenient way to bake your traditional Christmas cake, using an air fryer can be a fantastic option. Not only does it speed up the process, but it also delivers a cake that's just as moist and flavorful as one baked in the oven. With the right steps and ingredients, you can bake a delicious, fruit-filled Christmas cake in no time.

Getting Ready to Bake Your Air Fryer Christmas Cake

Before diving into the baking process, ensure you have all the necessary tools and ingredients. The key piece of equipment here is an air fryer that's large enough to hold an 18cm (7-inch) round cake tin. The cake tin itself should be air fryer-compatible, allowing for adequate air circulation around it to ensure even baking. Whether or not your tin is non-stick, line it with baking parchment or grease it generously to avoid any sticking issues.

Essential Ingredients:

- 3 large eggs
- 300g (10oz) plain flour
- 250g (8oz) softened butter
- 250g (8oz) light muscovado sugar
- 1 tbsp ground mixed spice
- Pinch of salt
- 410g jar of mincemeat
- 500g (1lb) dried mixed fruit
- 4 tbsp brandy
- 18cm (7-inch) round cake tin (lined with baking parchment)

How to Make

Step 1: Preparing the Cake Batter

To start, gather a large mixing bowl and add the following ingredients: eggs, plain flour, softened butter, light muscovado sugar, ground mixed spice, a pinch of salt, the jar of mincemeat, and dried mixed fruit. It's essential to leave the brandy out for now. Mix the ingredients until they are thoroughly combined, and your batter is smooth and well-incorporated.

Step 2: Prepping and Baking the Cake

Once the mixture is ready, transfer it into your lined cake tin. Smooth the top of the mixture using a spatula or the back of a spoon to create an even surface. Then, carefully place the cake tin inside the air fryer basket.

Set the air fryer temperature to 160°C (320°F) and bake the cake for 30 minutes. At this point, the top should begin to brown slightly, but the cake will still need additional time to bake all the way through.

Step 3: Covering with Foil

After the initial 30 minutes of baking, you'll need to cover the top of the cake with foil. This prevents over-browning and ensures the center bakes evenly. Make sure the foil is snug around the edges of the cake tin, as the air fryer's fan can sometimes cause it to move around, uncovering the cake. Once the foil is in place, continue baking for another 1 hour and 20 minutes, giving the cake a total bake time of 1 hour and 50 minutes.

Step 4: Testing for Doneness

At the end of the 1 hour and 50-minute baking period, check the center of the cake by inserting a skewer or toothpick. If it comes out clean, your cake is fully baked. If the skewer comes out with batter, place the cake back into the air fryer for an additional 10 minutes and recheck until the skewer is clean.

It's essential not to exceed a total baking time of 2 hours, as this could result in an overbaked cake.

Step 5: Cooling and Storing

Once the cake is fully baked, allow it to cool completely in the tin. Removing the cake too early could cause it to break apart. After it has cooled, carefully remove the cake from the tin, wrap it in a layer of baking parchment or greaseproof paper, and then wrap it again in a layer of tin foil. This ensures the cake remains moist during storage.

Store your cake in an airtight container or cake tin, and periodically "feed" it with a liquid of your choice, such as brandy, sherry, cooled tea, or orange juice. Feeding the cake every two weeks in the lead-up to Christmas keeps it flavorful and moist.

Tips for Successful Air Fryer Christmas Cake Baking

1. Size Matters

Smaller cakes tend to bake more evenly and efficiently in an air fryer. If your air fryer is compact, consider using a smaller cake tin and scaling down the recipe accordingly. Always ensure there's ample space between the cake tin and the air fryer's walls for proper air circulation.

2. Slow and Steady Wins the Race

Baking your cake at a lower temperature over a longer period will help cook the cake thoroughly from the inside out. If you notice the top browning too quickly, covering it with foil is an easy fix to prevent burning while allowing the cake to continue baking.

3. Go for a Drier Cake Batter

Cakes with a higher ratio of dry ingredients (like flour) to wet ingredients (like butter and eggs) tend to bake better in an air fryer. Dense cakes such as pound cakes, classic sponge cakes, and fruitcakes like this one are ideal candidates for air frying, as they hold up well to the cooking method.

4. Choosing the Right Cake Tin

The cake tin you use must fit snugly into your air fryer while still allowing space for air circulation. If your air fryer has a square basket, using a square or rectangular tin may work better than a round tin. For this recipe, an 18cm (7-inch) round tin works well in most standard air fryers.

5. Make Use of Preset Functions

If your air fryer includes a preset baking function, consider using it when baking your first cake. These preset programs are often designed to cook at the ideal temperature and duration for baked goods. However, if you prefer more control, you can always manually set the temperature and time.

Can You Bake Other Cakes in an Air Fryer?

Absolutely! You can successfully bake many types of cakes in an air fryer, from pound cakes to Victoria sponges. However, wetter cakes, like banana bread, may take longer to bake due to their higher moisture content. It's always best to start with simpler, dry ingredient-heavy cakes when learning to bake with an air fryer.

How Long Does It Take to Bake a Cake in an Air Fryer?

On average, baking a cake in an air fryer takes around 30-40 minutes. However, this depends on the cake's size, the air fryer's capacity, and whether you're using a preset or manual temperature settings. A good rule of thumb is to reduce oven baking times by 20% and temperatures by 20-30°C when using an air fryer.

Should I Bake My Christmas Cake Early?

Traditionally, Christmas cakes are baked 2-3 months before Christmas to allow time for maturation, especially if you plan to "feed" the cake with alcohol or fruit juices. But if time is tight, you can still bake a wonderful Christmas cake closer to the holiday.

Feeding Your Christmas Cake

Feeding the cake involves adding a tablespoon or two of liquid—such as brandy, sherry, or juice—every two weeks. Simply poke a few holes into the top of the cake with a skewer, and then pour the liquid over it. Be sure not to overdo it, as this could make the cake too soggy.

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- 1 tbsp ground mixed spice
- Pinch of salt
- 410g jar of mincemeat
- 500g (1lb) dried mixed fruit
- 4 tbsp brandy
- 18cm (7-inch) round cake tin (lined with baking parchment)

Steps:

1. Mix together eggs, flour, butter, sugar, mixed spice, salt, mincemeat, and dried fruit in a large bowl.
2. Transfer the batter to the cake tin, smooth the top, and place it in the air fryer.
3. Bake at 160°C for 30 minutes, then cover the top with foil.
4. Continue baking for 1 hour and 20 minutes.
5. Test the cake with a skewer; if clean, it's done. Let it cool completely before storing. Feed every two weeks with your preferred liquid until Christmas.

Category

1. Air Fryer Recipes

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