

CAKES, BISCUITS & BREADS

Rich and luscious are the famous cakes of Italy. And the exotic biscuits, many of them with popular almond flavouring, are delicious.

RICOTTA CAKE

Torta di Ricotta

YOU WILL NEED:

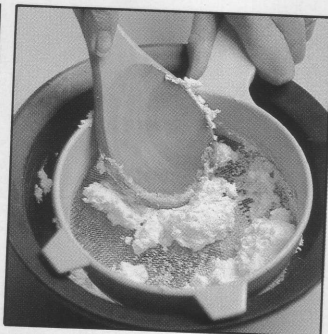
- 1 packet chocolate cake mix
- 185g (6oz) ricotta cheese
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons Grand Marnier
- 30g (1oz) preserved ginger
- 30g (1oz) glace cherries
- 30g (1oz) dark chocolate

SYRUP

- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ⅓ cup water
- 2 tablespoons Grand Marnier

ICING

- 90g (3oz) flaked almonds
- ¼ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup water
- 125g (4oz) butter
- 90g (3oz) dark chocolate



2. Push ricotta cheese through wire strainer into small bowl. Beat mixture until smooth and creamy (this is easier if done on an electric mixer). Gradually beat in sugar and Grand Marnier. Stir in finely chopped ginger, cherries and chocolate, mix well.

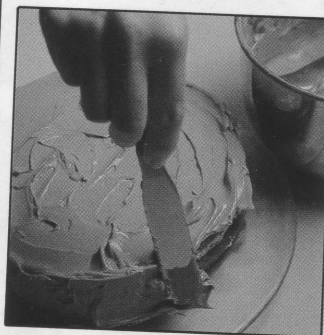
3. Cut the cake horizontally into 3 layers. Place one layer on serving plate.

SYRUP

4. Combine sugar, water and Grand Marnier in pan, stir over moderate heat until sugar has dissolved. Allow to cool. Brush bottom layer of cake with cooled syrup.



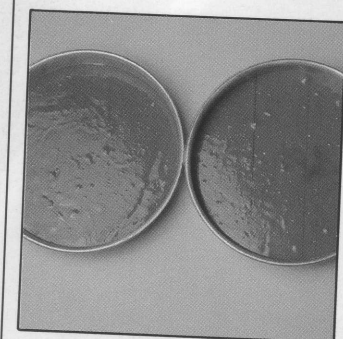
5. Spread half the filling over cake, top with another layer of cake, brush cake with syrup, spread with remaining filling, top with remaining layer of cake which has been brushed with syrup. Place flaked almonds on baking tray, bake in moderate oven 5 minutes or until pale golden brown; cool.



ICING

6. Place sugar and water in pan, stir over moderate heat until sugar has dissolved. Bring to boil, remove from heat, cool. Beat butter until soft and creamy, gradually beat in cooled syrup, a few drops at a time. Place chopped chocolate in top of double saucepan, stand over simmering water until chocolate has melted. Gradually add cooled melted chocolate to butter mixture. Beat until well combined. Spread icing over top and sides of cake, press flaked almonds around sides of cake. Using a rounded knife or spatula, swirl icing on top. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Allow to stand at room temperature 10 minutes before serving.

Serves 8



1. Make up cake mix according to directions on packet. Spoon mixture into two greased 20cm (8in) round sandwich tins. Bake in moderate oven 25 to 30 minutes or until cakes are cooked when tested. Turn out on wire racks to cool. (This recipe requires only one cake, the remaining cake can be frozen for future use.)