



Ingredients

Serves 6

- 15g fresh yeast
- 125ml full-fat milk, warm
- 400g strong white flour plus extra for dusting
- 3 pinches of salt
- 16g fresh yeast
- 125ml full-fat milk, warm
- 2 medium eggs
- 80g caster sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 150g salted butter, at room temperature, plus extra for brushing
- 120g mixed candied peel, chopped
- 60g raisins

Italian Home Baking

Panettone classico - Italian Christmas cake with dried fruits

This recipe brings back such happy memories as it's usually eaten at Christmas time. In Italy you can buy panettone all year round but it's harder to find in Britain. I had to put it in this book as it's definitely a cake that is too good to be eaten only once a year, so do try to track down a supplier. You can substitute chocolate chips for the dried fruit if you wish and if you have any leftovers, try using it to make my Panettone and Butter Pudding (see Italian Home Baking, page 104). Remember, a panettone is not just for Christmas!

1. Brush a 15cm diameter cake tin or soufflé dish with a little butter then line with a double layer of greaseproof paper and ensure that you leave a 'collar' of paper 8cm above the top of the tin. Oil the inside of a large bowl.
2. Melt the yeast in the milk, making sure that it is completely dissolved.
3. Setting aside 2 tablespoons of the flour, sift the remaining amount into a large bowl, sprinkle over the salt and make a well in the centre. Pour in the yeast and milk with the whole eggs and gently mix all the ingredients together to make a thick batter. Sprinkle over the reserved flour and leave the sponge in a warm place for 35 minutes.
4. Add in the sugar and egg yolks and mix together to create soft dough. Work in the soft butter then turn out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead for 5 minutes until smooth and elastic and shape into a ball.
5. Place the dough ball in the oiled bowl and cover with clingfilm. Leave it to rise in a warm place away from draughts for 2 hours.
6. Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured surface and punch down. Gently knead in the candied peel and raisins. Shape again into a ball and place in the prepared tin. Cover with clingfilm and leave it to rise in a warm place away from draughts for 1 hour.
7. Preheat the oven to 190°C/gas mark 5.
8. Use a sharp knife to cut a cross on the top and brush with a little butter.
9. Bake in the middle of the oven for 20 minutes. Lower the temperature to 180°C/gas mark 4, brush the top with more butter and continue to cook for a further 30 minutes.
10. Once out of the oven, cool the cake in the tin for 10 minutes then turn out onto a wire rack to cool.
11. Panettone is perfect served at room temperature with a cup of tea.



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