

LULU PORK CHOP

ELECTION CAKE

Adapted from "Rare Bits: Unusual Origins of Popular Recipes" by Patricia Bunning Stevens

Makes 12 servings

For the cake:

- 2 packages active dry yeast
- ½ cup hot water (about 100 degrees F)
- ½ cup lukewarm milk (scalded, then cooled)
- 3 cups all-purpose flour, plus 1 tablespoon for dusting the pan
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cardamom
- ½ teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 cup raisins, currants, or dried cranberries, roughly chopped
- ½ cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into 8 pieces, plus 1 tablespoon for greasing the pan
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the glaze:

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons milk of choice (all dairy and nondairy choices work)

Make the sponge: In a medium bowl, fork whisk the yeast and water until well blended, then add the milk. Gradually add 1 ½ cups of the flour, stirring with a rubber spatula until just mixed. It's gonna be a little shaggy; don't worry.

Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free spot until somewhat bubbly, about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, stir together the remaining $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups flour, sugar, salt, and spices in a medium bowl.

The dried fruit and nuts go in a small bowl.

Using a stand mixer or hand-held electric beater, get the dry ingredients moving so that they're evenly mixed. Go on low speed so that flour doesn't fly all over the place.

Now add the butter, mixing until the flour mixture is completely and evenly coated. It will be malleable, too.

Add the eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Don't forget that glug of vanilla.

Add the yeast mixture until just incorporated. Go easy here; you may want to start and stop a few times. (Note: if you are not using paddle attachments, stir the yeast mixture by hand.)

The fruit-nut mixture goes in last, mixed just a few times so it gets tossed around.

Grease and flour a 9-inch tube pan or large Bundt pan. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free spot until the batter is puffy and doubled, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hours. (You can also place in the refrigerator overnight for a slow rise. Just make sure to bring up to room temperature before baking.)

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Bake until the cake is golden brown and a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes.

Cool for 10 minutes, then loosen from the edges of the pan with a knife. Invert and cool completely on a rack, about 30 minutes. While the cake cools, make the glaze.

Sift the sugar over a small bowl (this helps minimize the clumps). Whisk in the vanilla and milk. The glaze will be a little on the thin side but thickens as you drizzle all over the cake. You'll see.