

CAKES OF OTHER COUNTRIES

SO far, in this series dealing with foreign meals, we have been gathering round the dinner table. This week let us have a bigger party, yet easier to manage, a tea-party. We had better make coffee as well as tea, so many Continental people prefer it. To share food together has always been a sign of fellowship, and overseas visitors would be charmed to find familiar dainties in New Zealand homes.

Poland—Magoorek

This is a special cake for Easter Sunday in the Ukraine and Poland. Try it with half quantities, for 9 eggs are hard to come by. Chop finely a pound each of almonds and hazelnuts, and a pound of mixed peel. Separate yolks from whites of 9 eggs. Beat first the yolks till light and lemon coloured, then add 1lb. sugar gradually, mixing very well. Add whites of eggs, first beaten to stiff froth, then 1lb. well sifted flour, grated rind of 2 lemons and juice of one. Finally add nuts and peel. Stir gently, pour into a well-buttered tin, cover with buttered paper, and bake in moderate oven 20 to 30 minutes. Test with knife, which will come out quite dry when cake is cooked. Leave to cool, sprinkle with sugar, and cut in squares.

Finland—Pepper Cakes

Half pound golden syrup, 1lb. sugar, 5 tablespoons sour cream, 1 teaspoon each of ginger and black pepper, 2lb. white flour, ¼lb. butter, 1 teaspoon ground cloves, 1 tablespoon orange candied peel, 2 teaspoons cinnamon, 2 teaspoons baking soda, 4 egg yolks. Heat syrup and sugar to boiling point, then stir till cold. Stir in cream and butter which must first be creamed together until light. Then add spices, peel, and egg yolks, one at a time, beating each in well. Then add flour and soda, and when mixture is smooth leave it in a cold place overnight. Next day roll out on floured board, cut into fancy shapes and bake in moderate oven 20 minutes. This mixture is also used for making a Santa Claus house at Christmas.

Denmark—Peppernuts

This is a typical Christmas recipe, in making which the children's aid is called in to do the rolling, cutting, and placing on trays. The Danish chef who gave it to me said these peppernuts were supposed to counteract the effects of over-indulgence in rich Christmas food—and that they came in handy to use as "counters" in card games and the like! One pound flour, 1 lb. brown sugar, 4 eggs, ½lb. butter, 2 teaspoons ground ginger, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, 1 teaspoon ground cloves, 2 tablespoons ground almonds. Work well together and roll out in long thin rolls, which are then cut into pieces as large as a big hazelnut. Bake a light golden brown.

France—Gâteau Moka

Half pound fresh butter, 4 egg yolks, ½lb. icing sugar, a wine-glass of very strong coffee and some sponge finger biscuits. This is a rich cake, made without flour, and requires no cooking. Mix

together butter and sugar till smooth as cream, then gradually stir in egg yolks and coffee. Rinse out mould with cold water, fill with alternate layers of the mixture and sponge finger biscuits, finishing with a biscuit layer, cover with a plate on which put a weight so that the cake is well pressed together. Stand on ice or in a bowl of cold salted water. Make the day before required.

Russia—Orichoviy Tort

Russian Walnut Cake. It contains neither butter nor flour, but 9 eggs. Put 9 egg-yolks into a basin with ½lb. sugar. Stir until smooth on low heat, then add ½lb. ground walnuts and 1½ tablespoons brown breadcrumbs, and mix very well. Add egg whites whisked to stiff froth. Butter 2 sandwich tins,

PAIN D'EPICE

This is French Gingerbread. Sift together ¾lb. flour, ½oz. baking powder and ¼lb. ground rice. Chop fine a little lemon rind. Warm 8oz. butter and 10oz. treacle or honey together till liquid and stir this, also a beaten egg, into flour mixture. Add 1oz. ground ginger, 4oz. ground almonds, a little grated nutmeg and ground cloves and ¼ teacup milk. Beat 20 to 30 minutes. Put mixture into well-buttered tin and bake in moderate oven about 40 minutes. When cold cut in thin slices or fancy shapes.

sprinkle with flour and shake out. Slightly more than half-fill them with the mixture and bake in moderate oven approximately ½ hour. Turn out on to cake rack. When cold spread with Almond Cream Filling made thus: Two tablespoons fresh cream, ¼lb. each of ground almonds and sugar, 2 eggs. Put all ingredients into double saucepan and stir continuously till mixture thickens. Leave to cool before spreading on sponge or other cake sandwiches. Cake should be cool before filling is used. Russian Icing for Walnut Cake: 1 cup soft brown sugar, ½ cup boiling water, 1 egg white. It is easy and quick to make in dry weather, but do not try it on a damp day. Boil sugar and water together hard about 7 minutes. Butter finger tips to test the mixture in cold water. When it rolls up into a soft ball it is cooked. Whisk stiff 1 white of egg and gradually pour hot boiling syrup into this, beating all the time with a wooden spoon until creamy. Use as icing and trim with pieces of walnut, almonds, glacé or crystallised fruit.

Germany—Honey Cakes

Half cup butter, 2 cups flour, 1 egg, 2 tablespoons baking powder, 1 cup sugar, ½ cup chopped nuts, ½ cup strained honey. Cream butter and sugar, add beaten eggs and honey. Sift together flour and baking powder and stir them into mixture. Stand aside in cool place overnight. Roll out thin, cut into shapes, brush over with white of egg diluted with warm water. Sprinkle with granulated sugar and chopped nuts, and bake.

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