

Jane's Toffee Cake Recipe



This recipe comes from **JANE MACBEAN**, who is a longstanding friend of Hardy's. For many a year she has given Rob Hardy a helping hand at Gardener's World and the RHS Malvern Show. One of the team who keeps the show on the road and cake on the plates. She never forgets the team back at the nursery either and always send some cake back to the hungry hordes here too. **THANK YOU JANE**

From her varied baking repertoire Jane chose her 'Toffee Cake'. She says 'I thought I would start with this recipe as it is a favourite of Rob's. He likes all cake as we know, but this one always gives him a quick energy burst from the topping when we are working at the shows. It's also a real favourite at our NGS garden openings and goes really well with a cup of tea

Jane opens her garden at South Lodge in Clearwell in the Forest of Dean under the NGS and by appointment. Try and catch it, it is very beautiful.

Cake Ingredients

75g butter/ margarine

175g stoned dates

200mls boiling water

5g bicarbonate of soda

150g soft brown sugar

2 large eggs

175g self-raising flour

2.5g baking powder

Topping Ingredients

50g butter

50g dark sugar

75mls baking golden syrup

75 - 100g icing sugar

Butterscotch, fudge or honeycomb pieces for decoration - optional

Equipment

20cm diameter 4cm deep cake tin

Method - Cake

Pour the boiled water into a jug or mixing bowl with the bicarbonate of soda, add the dates and leave to soak whilst you mix the batter. This softens the dates making them easier to chop.

In another bowl mix together the butter and sugar until creamy. Then add the eggs and beat really well.

Sift the flour and fold into the mixture along with the baking powder. Ensure it is all mixed very well, the mixture will be thick.

Add the water and dates which have been chopped and pour the mixture into a lined 20cm diameter baking tin.

Bake on 180 degrees Celsius/160 degrees Celsius Fan Oven/Gas Mark 4 for about 25-30 minutes until a skewer comes out clean. Leave the cake to cool before placing it on a plate.

Topping

Put all the topping ingredients into a heat resisting bowl in a saucepan of simmering but not boiling water on the hob. Stir until all of them have melted and blended together.

Add 75-100g of sifted icing sugar and stir gently until it is quite thick and there are no lumps. Pour immediately over the cooled cake - it will start to set very quickly.

Sprinkle either butterscotch, fudge or honeycomb pieces on the top (optional).

Eat and enjoy remembering that the dates are part of your five a day!