Dark, rich fruit cake wreath

Recipe by Zola Nene

Serves: 6-8

Cooking: 2hrs

Difficulty: Medium

Ingredients :

- 200g butter
- 200g Selati Muscovado sugar
- 75ml brandy
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 250g raisins
- 250g currants
- 100g dried cranberries
- 100g chopped dried apricots
- 100g dried pears, chopped
- 100g dark (70% cocoa) chocolate, chopped
- 200g self-raising flour
- 100g ground almonds
- 3 Tbs cocoa powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 3 eggs, beaten

To feed:

- 45ml brandy (for each feeding session per week)

Methods :

- Combine butter, sugar, brandy, vanilla, raisins, currants, cranberries, apricots and pears into a large pot. Heat gently, stirring occasionally until everything has melted together.
- Remove from the heat then stir in the chocolate to melt, then leave to cool.

- Heat oven to 150C. Grease a deep round bundt tin, 20cm. Wrap a few layers of newspaper around the outside of the tin and secure with string – this will protect your cake from the harsh heat in the oven.
- Mix the self-raising flour, ground almonds, cocoa and cinnamon.
- Stir the eggs into the slightly cooled chocolate mixture.
- Mix in the dry ingredients then transfer into the prepared tin.
- Bake for about 1 hr 30 mins or until a skewer inserted comes out clean. If the top of the cake gets too dark, then cover with foil for remainder of cooking time.
- Leave to cool completely in the tin then poke holes all over the cake using a cake tester or toothpick.
- Pour the brandy over the cake, then store in an airtight container.
- Feed the cake once a week by pouring over 45ml brandy until ready to decorate and eat on Christmas day.