

# NOSTALGIC SEASONAL TREATS

*Posted on December 2, 2019*



**As we approach the darkest night, we see decorations begin to go up and fairy lights shining away making the dark cold evenings feel cosy and full of magic. It is a busy time in our Homes and the run up to Christmas brings a buzz of activity; you will begin to see choirs, Christmas fairs and staff dressed as elves popping up all over the place!**

Festive food has all been arranged and the early ordering and organisation is all in place. Food at Christmas is at the heart of the festivities – it is the thing that brings us all together. Whether it be a cuppa over a mince pie, or a meal at a table with loved ones, it will be made special with something indulgently warming to eat and drink.

When thinking of those living in our **Nellsar Homes**, we consider the different times people have lived through and the various diets we strive to cater for.

Some of our residents would have lived through the second world war and remember their mothers and grandmothers baking with the very basic ingredients a ration book would allow. Christmas would have been a time when people baked something special; wartime short breads for example.

## Wartime Scotch shortbread recipe

Melt 4oz margarine, add 8oz plain flour and 2oz sugar, mix well and knead until the mixture binds together.

If it is a little dry, crumble it again and add a splash of milk and re-knead. Put in an un-greased baking tin and press the mixture down firmly so it is about 1/2 inch thick.

Prick the surface and then cut into 10-12 portions.

Bake in centre of moderate oven for 30+ minutes.

Remove, sprinkle lightly with sugar and serve.

## Wartime Christmas Cake

This wartime recipe for a Christmas cake is made with ingredients which might have been saved over the weeks leading up to Christmas day.

### Ingredients

- 10oz whole wheat flour
- 2oz seedless raisins or sultanas
- 4oz chopped seeded raisins or dates
- 4 oz cooking fat
- 4 oz sugar
- 2 large tablespoons black treacle
- teaspoon ground mixed spice
- teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- cup milk
- teaspoon almond essence
- teaspoon ground ginger

### Method

Rub fat into flour, add all dry ingredients except soda, and mix well.

Dissolve soda in milk, add treacle to dry ingredients and then milk and soda and almond essence, and beat all together thoroughly.

Line a baking tin with greased paper, place mixture in and cook in very slow oven for 2½ hours.

## Christmas Fare

Here are recipes for popular Christmas items. You'll find that, though they're not extravagant with ingredients, they give you the traditional Christmassy flavour.



### CHRISTMAS CAKE

3 oz. sugar, 4 oz. margarine, 3 level tablespoons treacle or syrup, 8 oz. plain flour, ½ level teaspoon bicarbonate of soda, pinch of salt, 1 level teaspoon cinnamon, 1 level teaspoon mixed spice, 2 eggs, fresh or dried, 1 lb. mixed dried fruit, 3 tablespoons cold tea.



Cream the sugar and margarine together and beat in the treacle or syrup. Mix the flour, soda, salt and spices together. Add alternately with the eggs to the creamed mixture

and beat well. Add the fruit and mix in the tea. Put the mixture into a 7" tin, lined with greased paper, and bake in a very moderate oven for 2½ hours.

ICING: 6 oz. icing sugar, 1 tablespoon water, few drops lemon juice or lemon substitute. Sift sugar into a bowl to remove lumps, add water and lemon juice and mix till smooth with a wooden spoon. Spread with knife on cake, dipping knife into water occasionally to give a smooth surface. This is sufficient for a thin layer on top of 7" cake.

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(S.186)



## References

[Shortbread recipe](#)

[Wartime Christmas Cake recipe](#)

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