

ANNIE'S CHRISTMAS FRUITCAKE RECIPE

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Follow step-by-step, photo illustrated instructions to make this very special Christmas Fruitcake. No flour or baking is involved, just add all the ingredients into a large bowl and mix well. Spoon the mixture into small aluminum loaf pans and make Christmas gifts for all the special people on your list. Printable recipe included.



Annie's Christmas Fruitcake Recipe:

Behind every good fruitcake, there's a story. This one is mine.

"You fill up my senses, like a night in a forest, like the mountains in springtime, like a walk in the rain," are lyrics from "Annie's Song," by John Denver. It became a Number One hit back in 1974 and was written by Denver for his wife. I always liked the song and played it many times during my years in radio.

When the young blonde haired girl I met when I was 12 and she was 9, grew up and married someone else, there comes a time when you resolve within yourself that it's time to move on. It just wasn't meant to be. Back then, marriages lasted a lifetime. It was a total commitment to each other that was suppose to survive through anything. Divorce was something you just didn't think much about. Or, at least not while growing up Gordon. She was married, happy, having a family and that was the way it was.

Years later, I met Annie. She too was a beauty to behold. Her dark brown hair, big beautiful eyes, that glowing smile, I might have been hooked again. It cost me though. You see, Annie ran a register at a store just a couple of doors down from where I worked. I was brave enough to go through her check out line the first time I saw her, and was thrilled when she smiled and spoke to me. After that, I found some reason about every time she worked to go back to that store and purchase something, anything, usually small office stuff, but it gave me a chance to work my way into her check out line again and again.

One day, I paid a friend five dollars to drop a letter I had written into the open window of Annie's car. I could see her when she got off work and opened her car door to head home. I nervously watched from a distance as she sat there awhile, reading my letter. Would it ruin the little bit of friendship I had built up? What would she think of me now?

It took a few days, but she wrote me back. I was so nervous when I saw that letter in my mailbox, but I'd like to think that we became better friends from that day forward. I continued to visit the store and buy stuff, we continued to exchange friendly letters. I sent her flowers on her birthday, but it ended up that she didn't work that day. A couple of days later, she came to my place of work very excited about getting them and hugged my neck.

I knew she "kinda had" a boyfriend, but I got up enough nerve once to ask her to go with me to a

John Denver concert. She said she couldn't. "How about we just go get some ice cream one night," I asked. She said she couldn't, stating that her Father wouldn't let her. I suspected it might be because I was a few years older, but we still remained friends.

That Christmas, Annie gave me a small, individual fruitcake, that she had made with her mother. I couldn't eat it, it was too special. I saved it in my dresser drawer for over a week, thinking about her each and every time I looked at it. But, I finally gave in and cut into it. It was awesome of course.

Some time later, Annie got married. I still have the wedding invitation she sent me, but I didn't go.

The world was changing, the blonde headed girl I met when I was 12 and she was 9, came back into my life. Her marriage had run into problems and they were getting a divorce. As soon as we could, we got married. We shared 17 wonderful years together and life was great. She met Annie, she sold her Avon, she knew we had been pen pals. I had to burn all those pen pal letters to show my devotion... and I did. Seventeen years later, she was suddenly gone.

It was about 6 years after my wife passed away before I saw Annie again at a local Relay for Life event. I was surprised she even recognized me. My hair was very long, my beard was very long, I was still in depression, but Annie didn't know that. We spoke just briefly, she hugged my neck, said it was good to see me, then joined back with her husband and walked away.

Several more years would pass before we'd see each other again. I was at another radio station now, and the long hair and long beard were gone. I was doing a remote broadcast at a local festival, Annie spotted me, walked up, and said Hello. She had a Grandbaby on her arm. We talked just briefly and I missed my cue for my next on-air segment. She walked away as I tried to recover and get back on-the-air. As always, it was good to see her, it was just too brief and I had lots more questions.

Half a year passed before Annie showed up at an event that I was doing another remote broadcast for. We talked a few minutes and I told her about this new Taste of Southern website I had recently started.

I asked her if she would share the recipe from that fruitcake she had given me all those years before. Annie seemed surprised that I still remembered it, but promised that she would try and get a copy of it to me. I gave her a card with my Email address on it.

I even managed to talk her into letting me interview her on-the-air that day, but it was all a blur. She makes me nervous, just like the blonde hair girl that I met when I was 12 and she was 9.



It took a few months, but as Christmas rolled around, I got a handwritten copy of the recipe... and another small fruitcake.

Annie and I were trading friendly Emails almost everyday now, sometimes several times a day. She was no longer married, I was a widower. This time though, my health was changing and I was struggling with lots of stress at work because of it. She didn't know it, but those little notes helped me make it through many a long, hard, stress filled work day. I eventually gave up the job.

Annie and I traded Emails for almost a year, but I've never seen her again. Then, sometime in May, the Emails stopped coming. Just as quickly as she had walked back in, she stopped writing and I've never known why. I suspect she might have a serious fellow, but don't know that for certain. I just hope she's happy and that she really wouldn't mind me sharing this story and her recipe. I didn't get the chance to ask, but I really don't think she would object.



I love handwritten recipes. When I asked Annie for this recipe, I requested that she write it out by hand. She must have remembered that.

Yes, it's a bit expensive these days to put all these ingredients together, but if you know someone that you'd like to share it with... it will be well worth it. If Annie ever sees this, I hope she'll approve. Friends are hard to come by, good friends can hopefully get away with some things others can't. I'll always be thankful for her friendship. Maybe I'll get to see her again one day, or maybe she'll send me another fruitcake or recipe. A guy can dream can't he?

So, that's the story behind how this particular recipe ended up here on Taste of Southern. I do hope you'll enjoy it. Ready to give Annie's Christmas Fruitcake a try? Then, Let's Get Cooking.



Annie's Christmas Fruitcake: You'll need these ingredients.



First, you're going to need a really BIG bowl to mix this up in. Get the largest one you have, or maybe a dishpan. Begin by crumbling the entire box of Graham Crackers up in the bowl. I just squeezed and crushed each individual pack that was in the box. Have some fun, take out some frustrations and holiday stress. Go for it.



I even pulled out this food chopper and chopped them up some more.



Add the box of Raisins.



I decided to slice the Candied Cherries. Annie's recipe just said add them, it didn't say whether to slice them or not. OK... I just changed the recipe a bit didn't I?



They're all GREEN. I went to TWO stores in search of Red Candied Cherries and neither place had them. I was so disappointed. Is there a shortage on them that I wasn't aware of? I smell a Grinch. A GREEN Grinch. Just saying.



Chop the Pecans. I bought these at the NC State Farmer's Market a week or so ago. Last year, shelled pecans were going for \$9.00 per pound. This year, they were \$10.00 per pound. My brother and I travel to South Carolina quite a bit and we thought we might be able to find some cheaper down there. Sadly, the places we stopped at said they just didn't have any this year. Older brother bought one bag of shelled pecans for \$11.50 per pound. How about where you live?



Add the Pecans to the other ingredients.

Chop the English Walnuts.



Add the chopped Walnuts.



Chop the Brazil Nuts.



Add the chopped Brazil nuts to the mixture.



Add the Coconut. Be sure to break up any large clumps and spread it out evenly.



Jump in with both hands and mix everything together REALLY well. Scoop down to the bottom and bring up all those Graham Cracker crumbs that like to cling to the bottom. Don't go slack on this step. Make sure it's all incorporated together real good.



Place the Mini-Marshmallows in a medium size sauce pot. Place that over medium-low heat, and melt the Marshmallows. You'll need to constantly stir them as they melt, making sure they don't burn or scorch on the bottom of the pan.



Pour the melted Marshmallows over the top of the dry ingredients. Scoop out as much as you can. I just placed my pot in the sink, filled it with hot water and detergent. I'll let you know if I get it clean. Just saying.



Open the can of Condensed Milk and pour it all over the top of the melted Marshmallows.



You'll need to jump back in with both hands once again. I was going to use some gloves to do this part, but quickly decided I'd be very unhappy to find a piece of the glove missing later. The mixture will be warm when you start and very sticky of course. Just go ahead and stir it up really good, and be sure you have it all mixed together.

When it's fully mixed, scoop some out and place it in one of your small aluminum loaf pans. Fill all the loaf pans, patting it down with your fingers as best you can. Again, it's sticky and a bit difficult to work with, but you'll be happy when it's all over with.



If you're using the gift pans, fill each pan and press the fruitcake mixture down firmly into the pan. You could decorate the tops, or leave them plain. I've placed a couple of Maraschino Cherries and some Pecan halves on the top of this one. You might want to save the decorating part until you get ready to hand them out as gifts.

When the mixture is pressed into the pans, wrap them with plastic wrap or aluminum foil and place them in the refrigerator. They need a day or two to setup properly and for the flavors to all meld together well. Leave them refrigerated until you're ready to give them out as gifts.

It's best to Keep Them Refrigerated, as much as possible. Cakes could be wrapped with plastic wrap and tied with Christmas ribbon and bows for an extra special look. I had just the perfect amount for NINE of the small aluminum loaf pans. Enjoy!