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How to make Julekake

By LeAnn R. Ralph

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From the book: Christmas In Dairyland (True Stories From a Wisconsin Farm)
<http://ruralroute2.com>

My mother was the daughter of Norwegian immigrants who homesteaded our small Wisconsin dairy farm in the late 1800s. Julekake was one of the goodies my mother baked for Christmas.

Julekake

This recipe makes two large round loaves.

- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup butter (or margarine)
- 2 packages of yeast
- 1/2 cup warm water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cardamom (substitute cinnamon or nutmeg if you prefer)
- 7 cups flour
- 1 cup of raisins
- 1/2 cup of citron
- 1/2 cup of red candied cherries
- 1/2 cup of green candied cherries

In a medium saucepan, heat the butter, milk, sugar and salt until the margarine/butter has melted. Pour the milk mixture into a large bowl and let it cool.

Dissolve the yeast in the warm water and add it to the milk mixture. Add the cardamom (or other spice) and 3 cups of flour and beat until smooth. Mix in the fruit and 4 cups of flour. Knead the dough for about 10 minutes. If the dough becomes too sticky, knead in another 1/4 to 1/2 cup of flour.

How to make Julekake

Put the dough in a greased bowl and cover and let it rise in a warm place until doubled, or about one hour.

Punch down the dough and divide in half. Knead for a minute or so, and then form each half into rounds. Place the dough on a large greased cookie sheet and let rise for 45 minutes. (The loaves will become very large, so be careful not to put them too close to the edge of the cookie sheet.)

Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes. If the loaves start turning too brown, turn the oven down to 325. After you remove the loaves from the oven, brush them with shortening while they are still hot. This will help the crust to stay soft. Remove loaves from the cookie sheet. Allow the julekake to cool before slicing.

If you prefer, after the julekake is cool, drizzle on powdered sugar icing and decorate with cherries,

walnuts or pecans.

LeAnn R. Ralph is a freelance writer in west central Wisconsin, is the editor of the Wisconsin Regional Writer (the quarterly publication of the Wisconsin Regional Writers' Assoc.) and is the author the book: Christmas In Dairyland (True Stories From a Wisconsin Farm) (August 2003; trade paperback) <http://ruralroute2.com>

Sot Suppe (Norwegian Sweet Soup)

By LeAnn R. Ralph

~ "Sot Suppe" ~ (Norwegian Sweet Soup)

My mother was the daughter of Norwegian immigrants who homesteaded our small Wisconsin dairy farm in the late 1800s. When my mother was a child, sweet soup was a traditional part of Christmas Eve, served cold with julekake, lefse, Christmas bread, or open-faced sandwiches. Sweet Soup is made with dried fruit and tapioca.

Sot Suppe 6 cups water 1/3 cup sugar 1 tablespoon quick-cooking tapioca 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon (depending upon how well you like the taste of cinnamon; you can also use a cinnamon stick) 2 cups dried fruit (use any kind you like: apples, apricots, peaches or a mixture of dried fruit) 1 cup raisins (dark or golden) 1 cup dried prunes 1 tablespoon lemon juice (you can also use 1 teaspoon of dried lemon rind or several slices of fresh lemon)

In a medium saucepan, combine the sugar, tapioca, cinnamon and water. Bring to boiling, stirring constantly. Stir in fruit (including the lemon if you're using sliced lemon) and heat to boiling again. Cover. Simmer for 15 minutes, or until the fruit is tender.

How to make Julekake

After the fruit is tender, if you're using lemon juice, stir in the lemon juice (or teaspoon of dried lemon rind). Serve either cold or warm, depending upon your preference. If you use a sliced lemon, remove the lemon rind before serving.

For a light afternoon 'Norwegian' lunch (after hiking, sledding, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing), serve sweet soup with Julekake or Christmas bread, Christmas cookies, open-faced sandwiches, and a variety of sliced cheeses.

Sweet Soup also is good served cold on a hot summer day.

LeAnn R. Ralph is a freelance writer for two newspapers in west central Wisconsin, is the editor of the Wisconsin Regional Writer (the quarterly publication of the Wisconsin Regional Writers' Assoc.) and is the author of the book, Christmas In Dairyland (True Stories From a Wisconsin Farm) (Aug. 2003); trade paperback. For more information about Christmas In Dairyland, visit

Sot Suppe (Norwegian Sweet Soup)
Whatever Happened to Christmas?
Book Review : Christmas in Dairyland



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