



Panforte **(Italian Holiday Cake)**

½ cup plain flour
1/3 cup Dutch cocoa powder
1 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground nutmeg
½ cup chopped dried dates
½ cup chopped dried prunes
½ cup chopped dried apricots
½ cup chopped dried figs
1 cup of chopped roasted macadamia nuts
1 cup of chopped blanched almonds
½ cup of chopped pistachio nuts
100g chopped dark chocolate
1 ½ tbsp grated orange rind
½ cup honey
½ cup caster sugar
2 tbsp water
1 tsp vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 150 degrees Celsius
2. Grease and line a 20cm springform cake tin with baking paper
3. Sift all dry ingredients (the first 4) into a large bowl, then add fruits, nuts, chocolate and rind. Mix ingredients together thoroughly
4. Place honey, water and sugar in a small heavy based saucepan and stir over a low heat, until sugar has completely dissolved
5. Turn up the heat and bring sugar syrup to the boil, then simmer without stirring for 5 minutes
6. Pour hot syrup and vanilla over the reserved mixture and use a wooden spoon to work quickly – combining the ingredients before the sugar syrup hardens. Then use slightly wet hands to press the mixture firmly and evenly into the base of the cake tin
7. Bake for approximately 40 minutes (watch that the top of the cake doesn't burn)
8. Cook cake in the pan on a wire rack for at least 2 hours
9. Remove Panforte from the cake tin and dust with icing sugar or more cocoa powder. I like to drizzle with melted white chocolate

NOTE Store in a cake container in the fridge. Cut into thin slices/wedges and serve with coffee. Before slicing, you may need to allow the cake time to stand and come to room temperature slightly.