

The Merian Cake

Our Patroness Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717) deserves to be experienced with all the senses. In her masterpiece on the insects of Surinam, created during her extensive trip to Surinam and completed in Amsterdam, she explains the taste of the new fruit "pineapple" to her contemporary public.

"The taste of this fruit is as if one had combined Grapes, Apricots, Red Currants, Apples and Pears with one another, and then discerns them simultaneously. Its taste is sweet yet strong. When one cuts it open the whole room smells of it."

The measurements for the following recipe are given in grams/
in oz. for the British baker
in measuring cups for the American cook.

Ingredients for the yeast dough

30 g / **a generous oz. of yeast for the pre-dough / the same for the Americans**
500 g / **ca. 18 oz / a generous 2 cups of flour**
250 ml / **8 oz. / 1 cup of milk**
60 g / **2 oz. / 1/3 cup of sugar**
90 g / **3 oz. / 3/8 cups of butter/margarine**
2 eggs
vanilla, a pinch of salt
(if desired refine with gingerbread spice and powdered orange peel)

Filling

finely chopped fruit of all five mentioned kinds (grapes, apricots, red currants, tart baking apples, pears)
sprinkled with a bit of preserving sugar

Crumble topping

150 g / **5 oz. / a cup of flour**
150 g / **5 oz. / a cup of sugar**
100 g / **3.5 oz. / 1/2 cup of butter**
vanilla, a pinch of salt
(optional: mix with flaked almonds)

Garnish

Perhaps with fresh pineapple pieces
(to preserve longer heat briefly beforehand with preserving sugar)

Preparation

Make the yeast dough and cover with fruits.
Evenly sprinkle with crumble
Baking time: 35-45 minutes at 190° C. / **375° F.**
If desired finally garnish with pieces of fresh pineapple

This culinary creation was the inspiration of Margot Lölhöffel. Delicious!.

(Easy variation: cover a ready made sponge cake with fresh fruits as mentioned.)