



Tommi's more-fruit-than-cake cake

'This cake was invented by Claire Ptak, an exceptionally talented pastry chef. I was so enraptured by the taste when I first tried it that when she put it in *Leon: Baking and Puddings* she named it after me.

I have since baked it many times. Last Christmas, short of time for stir-up Sunday, I quickly whipped it up, and have since added flaked almonds, currants and orange zest to the recipe (and occasionally a splash of something stronger) to make it even more festive'

Thomasina Miers



This rich, sticky fruit cake makes a deliciously moreish alternative to traditional Christmas baking

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Extract from Claire Ptak and Henry Dimbleby's

Leon: Baking and Puddings
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Red wine and figs have a special affinity for one another and the spices in this recipe. The fig seeds create a wonderful popping sensation as they burst in your mouth.

Serves: 8
Preparation time: 25 minutes
Cooking time: 45 minutes

Ingredients
375ml red wine
375g dried figs, chopped
1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
Quarter teaspoon ground cloves
125g unsalted butter, cold

250g honey, plus extra for the top
1 free-range egg, briefly whisked
200g spelt flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

Method

Heat the oven to 160°C/325°F/gas mark 3. Line a 20cm [8in] square cake tin with baking paper.

Put the red wine, figs and spices into a medium saucepan and bring to the boil. When the fruit has plumped up a little (about 5 minutes), remove the saucepan from the heat and allow to cool for 10 minutes. Stir in the butter and honey and leave for another 10 minutes. Stir in the egg.

Sift the flour, baking power and soda into a large mixing bowl. Pour the fig mixture over the flour mixture and stir just

until mixed. Pour into the tin. Bake for about 45 minutes, or until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Allow to cool in the tin.

And to drink...

When you're basking in the decadent aromas of cinnamon and cloves, I suggest you select an equally heady wine to enjoy with this figgy delight. You could drink an aged tawny port to emphasise the Lucullan warmth, but I'd recommend surprising your guests with the 2010 Elysium Black Muscat (£10.45 per half bottle) from California,

which makes use of a much under-appreciated grape. For me, it enlivens the opulent plumpness of the figs and makes a stellar supporting act for the sweet spice—this is a wine to complement, not upstage. It's no surprise that Elysium was the Greek Heaven. Chosen by Rosamund Hall of Jeroboams (020-7288 8850; www.jeroboams.co.uk)

