

WAR CAKE

Making do with Less

What is War Cake?

War Cake dates back to World War I when Americans were encouraged to reduce consumption of wheat, fats, meat, and sugar in order to ensure enough food was available to soldiers.

The recipe for War Cake first appeared in a pamphlet published by the United States Food Administration, which was established to help manage the wartime distribution of food.

War Cake recipes often included little or no sugar, milk, eggs, or butter because these ingredients were being conserved to supply soldiers during the war.

During the Great Depression in the 1930s similar cakes were popular as families looked for ways to stretch budgets. Home cooks needed substitutions for more expensive ingredients. Water was often substituted for milk, shortening for butter, and baking powder for eggs.

MAKE WAR CAKE AT HOME

A syrup base to sweeten the cake is created by boiling molasses, corn syrup water, and raisins. Boiled raisin cakes date back to the American Civil War.

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War Cake

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| 1 cup molasses. | 1 tsp cinnamon. |
| 1 cup corn sirup. | 1/2 tsp cloves. |
| 1 1/2 cups water. | 1/2 tsp nutmeg. |
| 1 cup raisins. | 3 cups flour. |
| 2 Tbsp lard or shortening. | 1/2 tsp baking soda. |
| 1 tsp salt. | 2 tsp baking powder. |

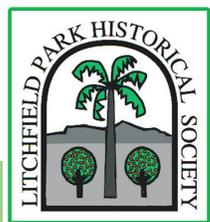
Boil together for 5 minutes the first nine ingredients. Cool, add the sifted dry ingredients and bake in two loaf pans (greased and floured) for 45 minutes at 325°.

This cake can be kept several days before using. It makes about 20 to 25 servings.

If desired 1 cup of oatmeal may be used in place of 7/8 cup of flour.

This recipe has been adapted from "War Economy in Food" published by the United States Food Administration in 1918.

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