

Martha Washington's Great Cake

(Adapted)

Courtesy of George Washington's Mount Vernon's *Dining with the Washingtons*

1 1/2 cups currants
1/3 cup chopped candied orange peel
1/3 cup chopped candied lemon peel
1/3 cup chopped candied citron
3/4 cup Maderia, divided
1/4 cup French brandy
3 cups all-purpose flour, sifted
1/2 cup slivered almonds
1/2 teaspoons ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoons ground mace
3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 1/2 cups sugar
3 large eggs, separated

1. Combined the first four ingredients and 1/2 cup of the Maderia. Stir, cover with plastic wrap and set aside for at least three hours. Stir the remaining Maderia with the brandy, cover, and set aside.
2. When ready to bake the cake, preheat the oven to 325°F. Grease and flour a 10-inch tube pan.
3. Drain the fruits over a bowl, stirring to extract as much of the Maderia as possible. Add the strained Maderia to the set-aside Maderia brandy.
4. Combine 1/4 cup of the flour and the almonds with the fruit, and mix well.
5. Sift the remaining flour with the nutmeg and mace.
6. Cream the butter until it is light. Add the sugar, 1/2 cup at a time, beating for several minutes after each addition. Whisk the egg yolks until they are light and smooth, and add them to the butter and sugar. Continue to beat for several minutes, until the mixture is light and fluffy.
7. Alternately add the spice flour (1/2 cup at a time) and the Maderia and brandy, beating until smooth.
8. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites to form stiff peaks. By hand, gently fold them into the batter, combining until well blended. By hand, fold in the fruit in thirds, mixing until well combined.
9. Pour the batter into the prepared pan, smoothing the top. Bake for 1 1/2 hours, or until a wooden skewer inserted in the center comes out clean.