

# Fruitcake in various countries

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## Australia

In Australia, fruit cake is consumed throughout the year, and is available at most major retail outlets. The cake is rarely eaten with icing or condiments.

## Bahamas

In the Bahamas, not only is the fruit cake drenched with rum, but the ingredients are as well. All of the candied fruits, walnuts, and raisins are placed in an enclosed container and are soaked with the darkest variety of rum, anywhere from 2 weeks to 3 months in advance. The cake ingredients are mixed, and once the cake has finished baking, rum is poured onto it while it is still hot.

## Canada

The fruit cake is commonly known as a [Christmas Cake](#) in [Canada](#) and eaten during the [Christmas](#) season. Rarely is it seen during other times of the year. The Canadian fruit cake is similar in style to the UK version, as it is in most [Commonwealth countries](#). However, there is rarely icing on the cake and alcohol is not commonly put in Christmas cakes that are sold. The cakes also tend to be void of any decorations and are shaped like a small loaf of bread.

Dark, moist and rich Christmas cakes are the most frequently consumed, with white Christmas cake rarely seen. These cakes tend to be made in mid-November to early December when the weather starts to cool down. They are a staple during Christmas dinner and a gift generally exchanged between business associates and close friends/family.

## France

In France, as in some other non-English speaking countries, the *gâteau aux fruits* ("fruit-cake") is often simply called "Cake".

## Germany

The *Stollen*, a traditional [German](#) fruit cake usually eaten during the Christmas season, is loaf-shaped and powdered with icing sugar on the outside. It is usually made with yeast, butter, water, flour, [zest,raisins](#), and [almonds](#).

The most famous Stollen is the *Dresdner Stollen*,<sup>[3]</sup> sold at the local Christmas market.

In Bremen, Klaben is traditionally sold and eaten during the Christmas season. Unlike the more famous Dresdner Stollen, Bremer Klaben is a kind of Stollen which is made without powdered sugar on top.

## Ireland

In Ireland, a type of fruitcake called [barmbrack](#) is eaten at Hallowe'en. The cake contains different objects such as a ring or small coin, each signifying a different fortune for the person who finds it.

## Italy

[Panforte](#) is a chewy, dense [Tuscan](#) fruit cake dating back to 13th-century [Siena](#). Panforte is strongly flavored with spices and baked in a shallow form. Genoa's fruitcake, a lower, denser but still crumbly variety, is called Pandolce

[Panettone](#) is a [Milanese](#) cake filled with dried and candied fruits, very similarly to fruitcake.

## India

Fruit cake is a rich dense cake packed with dry fruits and nuts flavoured with spices usually made during Christmas. In India, this is found everywhere during Christmas season, although it is also available commonly throughout the year.



Traditional Indian fruit cake.

## New Zealand

Fruit cakes arrived in New Zealand with early settlers from Britain. An early form was the plum duff that was boiled in a muslin cloth and served to migrants on board ships as a treat. Until the 1960s fruit cake was generally homemade, but since then they have become commercially widely available in a range of styles. Light coloured fruit cake is often sold as *tennis cake* or *light fruit-cake* all year round.

Most New Zealand wedding cakes are finely iced and decorated fruit cake often several tiers high. Most fruit cake is eaten in the Christmas period. It is dark, rich and made from multiple dried fruit. Homemade cakes may use brandy or sherry to enhance flavour rather than as a preservative. They may be square or round, iced or uniced. A Christmas cake is usually simply decorated with a Christmas scene or the words Merry Christmas.

An un-iced, soft version, known as Christmas pudding is often eaten with hot custard as Christmas dessert. The pudding version includes suet and spices such as cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg.

## **Portugal**

Although French in its origin, [Bolo Rei](#) is a traditional fruit cake enjoyed during Christmas season and a staple dessert in any Portuguese home during the holidays. Included is the characteristic fava bean and, according to tradition, whoever finds the fava bean has to pay for the cake next year.

## **Romania**

[Cozonac](#) is a fruit cake mostly made for every major holiday ([Christmas](#), [Easter](#), [New Year](#)).

## **Spain**



Bollo de higo preparation

[Bollo de higo](#) is a cake made from figs, almonds or walnuts, and flavorings, similar to a [panforte](#).

## **Switzerland**

Birnenbrot<sup>[4]</sup> is a dense sweet Swiss fruit cake with candied fruits and nuts.

## **Trinidad and Tobago**

Fruit cake, also called [black cake](#), is a traditional part of the Christmas celebration. The cake incorporates a large quantity of raisins and rum and becomes a staple dinner item between the Christmas season and New Years'.

## **United Kingdom**

In the UK, fruit cakes come in many varieties, from extremely light to rich and moist. The traditional Christmas cake is a round fruitcake covered in [marzipan](#) and then in white satin or [royal icing](#). They are often further decorated with snow scenes, holly leaves, and berries (real or artificial), or tiny decorative robins or [snowmen](#). It is also the tradition for this kind of cake to be served at weddings as part of the dessert course.

In Yorkshire, it is often served accompanied with cheese. Fruit cakes in the United Kingdom often contain [currants](#) and [glace cherries](#), an example of this type being the [Genoa cake](#). One type of cake that originated in Scotland is the [Dundee Cake](#), a type of fruit cake which does not contain [glace cherries](#). This is a fruit cake that is decorated with [almonds](#), and which owes its name to [Keiller's marmalade](#).

## United States



Traditional American fruit cake with fruits and nuts.

Typical American fruit cakes are rich in fruit and nuts.

Mail-order fruit cakes in America began in 1913. Some well-known American bakers of fruit cake include [Collin Street Bakery](#) in [Corsicana, Texas](#), and [The Claxton Bakery](#) in [Claxton, Georgia](#). Both Collin Street and Claxton are Southern companies with access to cheap nuts, for which the expression "nutty as a fruitcake" was derived in 1935.<sup>[2]</sup> Commercial fruit cakes are often sold from [catalogs](#) by [charities](#) as a [fund raiser](#).

Most American mass-produced fruit cakes are alcohol-free, but traditional recipes are saturated with [liqueurs](#) or [brandy](#) and covered in [powdered sugar](#), both of which prevent mold. Brandy (or wine) soaked linens can be used to store the fruit cakes, and some people feel that fruit cakes improve with age.

In the [United States](#), the fruit cake has been a ridiculed dessert. Some attribute the beginning of this trend with [The Tonight Show](#) host [Johnny Carson](#).<sup>[2]</sup> He would joke that there really is only one fruitcake in the world, passed from family to family. After Carson's death, the tradition continued with "The Fruitcake Lady" ([Marie Rudisill](#)), who made appearances on the show and offered her "fruitcake" opinions. In fact, the fruitcake had been a butt of jokes on television programs such as [Father Knows Best](#) and [The Donna Reed Show](#) years before The Tonight Show debuted and appears to have first become a vilified confection in the early 20th century, as evidenced by Warner Brothers cartoons.

Since 1995, [Manitou Springs, Colorado](#), has hosted the Great Fruitcake Toss on the first Saturday of every January. "We encourage the use of recycled fruitcakes,"

says Leslie Lewis of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce. The all-time Great Fruitcake Toss record is 1,420 feet, set in January 2007 by a group of eight [Boeing](#) engineers who built the "Omega 380," a mock artillery piece fueled by compressed air pumped by an exercise bike

### **Shelf life**

If a fruit cake contains alcohol, it could remain edible for many years. For example, a fruit cake baked in 1878 is kept as an heirloom by a family (Morgan L. Ford) in [Tecumseh, Michigan](#).<sup>[6]</sup> In 2003 it was sampled by Jay Leno on *The Tonight Show*.<sup>[7]</sup> Wrapping the cake in alcohol-soaked linen before storing is one method of lengthening its shelf life.<sup>1</sup>