

# King Cake - Traditional New Orleans Recipe

## Ingredients

- 1/2 cup warm water (110 to 115 degrees)
- 2 packages active dry yeast
- 1/2 cup plus 1 teaspoon sugar
- 3 1/2 - 4 1/2 cups flour unsifted
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 cup warm milk
- 5 egg yolks
- 1 stick butter cut into slices and softened, plus  
2 tablespoons more softened butter
- 1 egg slightly beaten with 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 1" plastic baby doll

## Directions

Pour the warm water into a small shallow bowl, and sprinkle yeast and 2 teaspoons sugar into it. Allow the yeast and sugar to rest for three minutes then mix thoroughly. Set bowl in a warm place, for ten minutes or until yeast bubbles up and mixture almost doubles up in volume.

Combine 3 1/2 cups of flour, remaining sugar, nutmeg and salt, and sift into a large mixing bowl. Stir in lemon zest. Separate center of mixture to form a hole and pour in yeast mixture and milk. Add egg yolks and using a wooden spoon slowly combine dry ingredients into the yeast/milk mixture. When mixture is smooth, beat in 8 tablespoons butter, 1 tablespoon at a time and continue to beat 2 minutes or until dough can be formed into a medium soft ball.

Place ball of dough on a lightly floured surface and knead like bread. During this kneading, add up to 1 cup more of flour (1 tablespoon at a time) sprinkled over the dough. When dough is no longer sticky, knead 10 minutes more until shiny and elastic.

Using a pastry brush, coat the inside of a large bowl evenly with one tablespoon softened butter. Place dough ball in the bowl and rotate

until the entire surface is buttered. Cover bowl with a moderately thick kitchen towel and place in a draft free spot for about 1 1/2 hours, or until the dough doubles in volume. Using a pastry brush, coat a large baking sheet with one tablespoon of butter and set aside.

Remove dough from bowl and place on lightly floured surface. Using your fist, punch dough down with a heavy blow. Sprinkle cinnamon over the top, pat and shake dough into a cylinder. Twist dough to form a curled cylinder and loop cylinder onto the buttered baking sheet. Pinch the ends together to complete the circle. Cover dough with towel and set it in draft free spot for 45 minutes until the circle of dough doubles in volume. Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees.

Brush top and sides of cake with egg wash and bake on middle rack of oven for 25 to 35 minutes until golden brown. Place cake on wire rack to cool. If desired, at this time, you can "hide" the plastic baby in the cake.

## Colored sugars

- Green, purple, & yellow paste
- 12 tablespoons sugar

Squeeze a dot of green paste in palm of hand. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons sugar over the paste and rub together quickly. Place this mixture on wax paper and wash hands to remove color. Repeat process for other 2 colors. Place aside.

## Icing

- 3 cups confectioners sugar
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 - 6 tablespoons water

Combine sugar, lemon juice and 3 tablespoons water until smooth. If icing is too stiff, add more water until spreadable. Spread icing over top of cake. Immediately sprinkle the colored sugars in individual rows consisting of about 2 rows of green, purple and yellow.

**Cake is served in 2" - 3" pieces.**