

Simply Trini Cooking Christmas Special



10 Delicious Recipes

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By Felix Padilla.

Simply Trini Cooking Christmas Special: 10 Delicious Recipes

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A Word from the Author



The “Trini” passion for food is strongest around the festive season of Christmas. It is one of our “Trini” expressions of celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ in a way where families come together to share a meal and reconnect with loved ones.

Therefore, the Trini Christmas meal is always abundant, tasty and colourful. It is always accompanied with Christmas music, especially our local Parang music that seems to elevate our jubilant spirits at this time of year. Without it Christmas would not feel like Christmas to us.

We at www.simplytrinicooking.com would like to share a little of our Trini Christmas happiness with our regular readers and visitors alike. We chose 10 of our favorite Christmas recipes and placed it in this booklet for you to enjoy. This is our way of saying thank you and wishing a Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.

These 10 recipes are simple and delightful. Hopefully, they will provide you and your family with lots of cheer and good memories this Christmas season.

However, these are just a small sample of Christmas recipes: there are lots more on the website. So, go ahead and indulge yourself in these 10 delightful recipes. Merry Christmas from Simply Trini Cooking.

Introduction

Christmas season begins in mid October and ends around January 6th, on the Feast of the Epiphany. This occasion is a religious one where Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and look forward towards His next coming.

During this time, Parang music, one of Trinidad and Tobago's folk music, is played more often. It is a lively and contagious music. The music is a reminder of the Spanish era in Trinidad and Tobago and was quite popular among the *cocoa panyols*.

This music is part of my heritage as well. I love this music. This music is what makes Christmas. I am dependent on it during this season because it gives me the feeling of merriment and goodwill. I can't help it; after all it is part of my heritage. Parang music brings people together to enjoy each other's company, and at the same time enjoy a good meal together.

People go *paranging*, or caroling house to house at neighbours. Sometimes with everyday objects converted into musical instruments like the famous bottle and spoon. There are no barriers to the methods of enjoyment.

I encourage you all to keep the traditions alive and enjoyment of Christmas with you family as well. Don't let the season pass by without bringing merriment to the people around you. Have a joyous Christmas! ¡Feliz Navidad a todos mis amigos!

Trini Christmas Delights



Sub Naya
Bon Pasco ●
Feliz Navidad
● *Merry Christmas*
Buone Feste Natalizie
Froehliche Weihnachten ●
Joyeux Noel ● *Meri Kirihimete*
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Merry Christmas
Merry Christmas
Merry Christmas

GHP Peanut Butter Cookies



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

1 cup brown sugar
½ -¾ cup peanut powder
½ cup butter
2 small eggs (or 1 large egg will do)
1 tsp. baking soda
1½ cups flour
2.83oz. (80g) almond nuts
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. vanilla or almond essence
(optional)
Pinch of salt

Cream the sugar, peanut powder, butter together. Blend in one egg at a time until smooth. Add the vanilla or almond essence and mix well.

Sift the salt, soda and flour together. Mix in the cinnamon and nutmeg.

Then stir the flour into creamed mixture.

Roll into balls, diameter about 1" or 1½" (for larger cookies), and placed on greased cookie sheets (about 5" apart). Place a piece of almond in the centre of each cookie and flatten slightly.

Preheat in a preheated 325°F oven for 15-18 minutes.

Recipe yields:

Approximately 2 dozen large cookies

The first cookies were created by accident when cooks started testing small amounts of their cake batter, called *koekje* or "little cake" in Dutch.

Sorrel Cake



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

2 cup strained sorrel pulp
1/2 cup mixed peel
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon almond essence
1/8 teaspoon red food colouring powder
1/2 pound flour
1 cup sugar
1 1/2 cup raisins
6 eggs
1 cup cherry brandy
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 pound butter
3 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup rum

The sorrel is boiled a bit, strained, and, and mince.

Wash and dry the fruits. Mince half the fruits. Mix all the fruits with the blended sorrel pulp. Add the almond and vanilla essence, pour 3/4 cup of the cherry brandy, and 1/2 cup of the rum on to the mixed fruit.

Cream the butter and sugar until light. Whisk eggs and add to butter mixture. Mix well. Add the fruits and colouring; mix well. Sift together the flour and baking powder. Add the salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Stir until smooth.

Pour into greased tin and bake in a low oven (180° F) until golden brown on the top and when stuck with a knife comes out clean.

Pour the remaining liquor over the cake (This part is of course optional if you wish to limit the amount of alcohol in the cake).

Sorrel derives from the sepals of the Roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) plant, an annual or perennial species of Hibiscus native to the old world tropics. Sorrel has a high content of vitamin C and anthocyanins.

Trinidad Sponge Cake



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

2 cups granulated sugar
1 cup butter
4 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla essence
3 cups flour
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. nutmeg
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 cup milk

Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Cream sugar and butter until smooth.

Beat the eggs. Add one at a time. Mix the lemon juice and milk.

Fold in a 1/3 flour and a 1/3 liquid, repeat. Beat in the vanilla essence.

Pour into greased pan and bake in a 350 degrees Fahrenheit oven until it leaves the sides of the pan. Alternatively, test with a thin knife; insert in the centre of the cake, if it comes out clean the cake is done.

Note: This is a milky sponge cake.

Trinidad Cornmeal Pastelle



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

Filling:

- 1 lb minced beef or pork
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 bunch chive
- 1 bunch big leaf thyme
- 1 hot pepper to taste, finely chopped
- 1 pimento pepper, finely chopped
- 1 stalk celery
- 2 cloves garlic
- 20 leaves chadon beni
- 1 bunch fine leaf thyme
- salt to taste
- ¼ cup roucou (or ketchup)
- 2 tbsp. capers (optional)
- 2 tbsp. raisins (optional)
- 8 olives chopped finely (optional)

Dough:

- 2 cups yellow cornmeal (very fine)
- 3 cups lukewarm water
- 4 tbsp. vegetable oil or coconut oil
- ¼ lb butter
- 1¼ tsp salt

Wrapping:

- 2 -3 large fig (banana) leaves
- Strings to tie

Season the meat. Stew the seasoned meat for 15 minutes. Cook well, and then add the roucou or ketchup. Remove from heat and set aside.

Combine cornmeal, water, salt, and butter to make a soft pliable dough. Divide the dough into small balls (about 12). Cover with damp cloth to prevent drying.

Cut the fig leaves and strip them from the midrib. Singe the leaf over a low fire on the stove. Wipe clean. Grind the green seasoning.

(If you like, you may mince the meat again to make it smoother.) Combine the seasoning and the meat and place back on the stove. Mix thoroughly and add salt to taste. Allow to cool. Dip the ball in the oil. Place on an oiled fig leaf. Use a wooden press to help flatten out the dough. Spoon about 2 tbsp meat filling to the centre of the dough. Fold the fig leaf and tie into a neat package using the string. Place in a pot of water and boil for 15-20 minutes. When cooked, drain the water.

Trinidad Flour Pastelle



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

Dough:

3 cups flour
3 tbsp. cookeen margarine
2 cups water

Filling:

2 packs mince meat (any meat of your choice)
5 cloves garlic
4 bundles chive
3 big thyme
1 small bundle cilantro
1 tsp. paprika, parsley
1 bouillon cube (beef or chicken)
Seasoning powder
2 tsp. tomato paste
1/2 tsp. golden ray margarine (optional)
2 tbsp. capers (optional)
2 tbsp. raisins (optional)
8 olives chopped finely (optional)
3-4 tbsp. roucou
Pepper and salt to taste

Wrapping:

2 - 3 large fig (banana) leaves
String to tie

Filling: Mix the seasoning and the meat and place in a heavy pot to cook until brown. Add the roucou, tomato paste, and golden ray margarine. Add a little pepper sauce to taste or 1 hot pepper, finely chopped. Add the rest of the ingredients. When done, remove from fire and set aside to cool.

Dough: In a deep bowl, sift the flour and cut in the cookeen margarine. Mix and slowly add the water until a soft dough is formed. Leave to rest for approximately 15 minutes. Cut the dough into small pieces and roll into 2 inch diameter balls. Cover and rest for 5 minutes. Grease the 2 square banana leaves on the smooth side only and place on the pastelle press. Place rolled dough in the centre on the first leaf. Press the second greased leaf over the dough. Remove the top leaf. Fold the leaf carefully. Tie the parcels. Repeat the process. Cook the pastelles in hot water or steam them in a double boiler for about 25-30 minutes. Drain and serve hot.

Recipe yields: about 30 pastelles.

Trinidad Paimé



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

2 cups cornmeal
½ cup flour
2 tbsp sugar
¼ cup shortening or butter
2 cups grated coconut
1 cup grated pumpkin
¼ cup raisins
1 cup water

Wrapping:
Banana leaves
Cotton strings to tie

1. Mix together all the ingredients and blend well.
2. To prepare banana leaves: Wipe leaves with a clean cloth dipped in a weak solution of bleach and water. Quickly pass the leaves over a medium to low flame. Allow the leaf to get slightly dark, not to burn. Cut the leaves into squares (about 15-20 cm) and set aside.
3. Grease a square leaf and place 2 tablespoon of the mixture in the center. Flatten a bit. Fold over leaves and tie securely. Boil in hot water for about 1/2 an hour.
4. Cool, remove from wrapping and serve.

Trini Christmas Ham 2



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

1 ham
whole cloves
banana leaves

Wash the ham and pat dry with paper towels.

Singe a banana leaf and cut it to fit a large baking dish. Place the ham in the dish skin side down and add the whole cloves.

Note: The general rule for baking ham is 25 minutes per Kilogram.

Wrap with the remaining banana leaves and bake at 350° F for 2 1/2 - 3 hours, depending on the size of the ham, or until thoroughly cooked.

While baking, test the meat by sticking a knife into it. If after sticking the meat, liquid comes out of it, then more baking is required. After 2 hours of baking, remove the banana leaves and continue baking to dry up the surface of the ham.

Place on a rack to cool.

Serve with your favourite kuchela or chutney.

It's best to follow package instructions for baking times. A fully cooked ham can be served as is, or glazed and roasted to an internal temperature of 140° F. Before carving, let baked ham rest for 15 minutes to redistribute juices and keep meat firm.

Sorrel Drink



Click [here](#) for recipe with pics.

1 lb. sorrel
11 cups water
1 cup sugar
2 sticks cinnamon
5 cloves (optional)
4 tbsp. grated
ginger(optional)
1/4-1/2 cup rum (optional)

Wash the sorrel. Separate the sepals from the 'seed'. Wash the sorrel sepals again. Place in a deep pot and add the water, cinnamon, and optional spices.

Boil for about 20 minutes or until the sepals begin to lose their colour and look jelly-like. Strain the sorrel and allow it to cool. After it cools, sweeten with sugar and add the rum if desired.

Transfer to a sterilized bottle and refrigerate. Serve chilled.

The seeds of the sorrel can be roasted and used as a coffee substitute

Ginger Beer



Click [here](#) for recipe with pic.

1 lb. fresh ginger
8 cups water
1 1/2 cups sugar (or to taste)
lime peel

Wash and remove the skin from the ginger. Chop the ginger and blend in a little water.

Pour into a large pot with the rest of water and leave to soak and ferment for about 24 hours or longer if you want it stronger tasting.

When fermented, strain the mixture. Add lime peel to the ginger beer and sweeten to taste.

Remove the lime peel, bottle and refrigerate. Serve chilled.

Ginger is a herb that has been used as a spice as well. Its nutrients are especially present in its volatile oils - gingerols and shogaols.

The following is a list of the nutritional values of ginger: calcium, carbohydrate, dietary fiber, Iron, magnesium, manganese, potassium, protein, selenium, sodium, vitamin C, E and B6

Ponche De Crème



Click [here](#) for recipe with pic.

4 eggs
1 tin condensed milk (390g)
1 carton evaporated milk
(250ml)
1/2 bottle rum (approx 1 1/2
cups)
3 tbsp. Angostura aromatic
bitters
1 tsp grated nutmeg
2 tsp. lemon zest (optional)

Blend the eggs together.

Add the evaporated milk,
condensed milk and nutmeg.

Blend the ingredients together.

Add the rum and bitters, and
blend one last time. Pour in a
clean bottle and refrigerate.

Serve chilled.



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Merry Christmas
Merry Christmas
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mERRY CHRIStmas!



Trini Christmas Sample Menu

Breakfast

- Cocoa tea
- Toasted orange bread with ham, cheese and lettuce
- A fruit

Lunch

- Roasted turkey and/ or Ham
- Cornmeal stuffing
- Salad with lettuce and tomatoes
- Stir fried broccoli, carrots and mushroom
- Pastelle
- Stewed pigeon peas
- Herbed rice
- Sorrel drink or ginger beer

Dessert

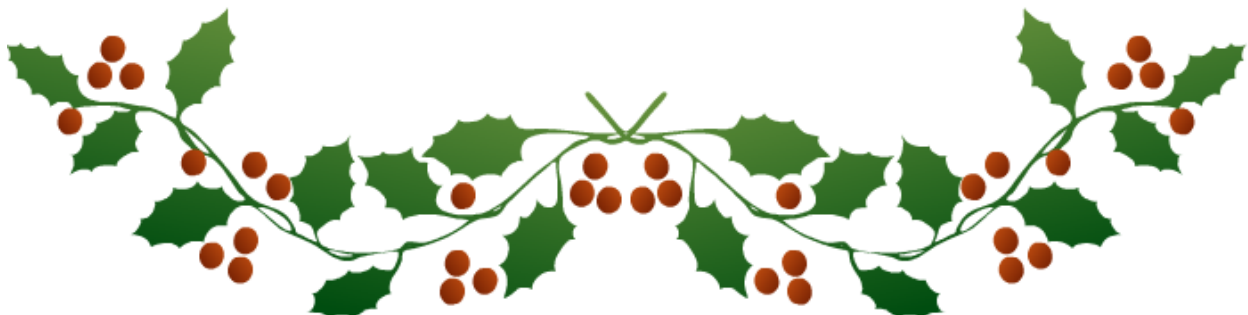
- Eggless cake or fruit cake
- Sour sop sorbet or Ponche de crème
- A fruit

Dinner

- Cream of pumpkin soup



1. Enhance your cake by adding a teaspoon of lemon juice to the butter and sugar to help make the cake lighter.
2. Lower fat content in your cakes by substituting about 50% of the oil for the cake with applesauce.
3. Measure all ingredients called for in the recipe and then sift the ingredients together.
4. Don't attempt to ice the cake until it is completely cool. Ice the cake with a thin layer of frosting and refrigerate for an hour before completing the frosting job. This helps keep the area free from crumbs while you frost.
5. Use a tube pan to bake a heavy or dense cake as it is designed to ensure the heat is carried to the center of the pan. As a result the cake rises evenly.
6. Avoid iron or steel black pans if you want a delicate crust for your cake.



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