

OUR CHRISTMAS PRESENT TO YOU

COURSE NOTES 1.0

A FREE RECIPE FOR STOLLEN

BREAD MAKING

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BBC
MAESTRO



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This is my indulgent take on a festive favourite. I love the Christmas flavours of stollen – fruit, almonds & cinnamon.

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23. Stollen

INGREDIENTS

Makes 6 small stollen

250g full fat milk
2 large eggs
500g strong white bread flour
25g caster sugar
10g fine sea salt
10g fresh yeast
100g unsalted butter
200g natural (un-coloured) marzipan, cut into 12 small pieces

For the frangipane:

125g unsalted butter, slightly softened
125g caster sugar
125g ground almonds
50g plain flour
2 eggs
2 large tablespoons rum

For the filling:

90g sultanas
50g natural glace cherries
100g mixed peel
30g toasted flaked almonds
2 tablespoons rum
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

For the egg glaze:

1 egg
pinch of fine sea salt

For the rum glaze:

250g unsalted butter
Small glass of rum
plenty of icing sugar, to dust

This is my indulgent take on a festive favourite. I love the Christmas flavours of stollen – fruit, almonds and cinnamon – but sometimes I find the texture can be a little dry, so I like to make mine with a dough enriched with eggs, butter and milk, and then introduce a little *crème d'amande* (almond cream), or frangipane as it is more often known, in addition to the traditional marzipan – just a little French *je ne sais quoi!* The frangipane adds a wonderful gooey-ness to the finished stollen.

I love *crème d'amande*. Every time I make it takes me straight back to my early days as an apprentice in the bakery, when my boss caught me in the big-walk in fridge with my finger in a big bowl of it – the aroma and the taste of it was irresistible, and I have made it in exactly the same way ever since. The secret is to add a little rum at the end. It not only adds flavour, but because it is made by distilling sugar cane it has the effect of bringing all the individual flavours together as one. Taste your frangipane before and after adding the rum and you will see what I mean.

Actually my stollen is laced with rum throughout! I use a splash, or several, to bind the fruit and nuts for the filling, and then the baked stollen goes into a bath of rum and butter before it receives its characteristic dusting of icing sugar – well, why not: it's Christmas!

It is easy to make the small amount of frangipane needed for this recipe by hand, but if you are making a large quantity you can use a mixer with a paddle.

The quantities below would make two medium size stollen but I like to make smaller ones to give away as Christmas presents. Or if you want to keep a couple back for yourself to bring back festive memories later on, they freeze well, wrapped in a layer of wax paper followed by greaseproof paper.

TO MAKE THE DOUGH

First pour the milk into the bowl of the mixer (with a dough hook), then add the eggs, followed by the flour, sugar and salt.

Take the yeast, cover it in a little of the flour from your bowl and then rub it between the palms of your hands, as if you were washing them, so that the yeast crumbles into the flour. Finally add the butter.

Start off on slow speed for 4 minutes, then turn up to medium speed until the dough comes away cleanly from the sides of the bowl.

Meanwhile, mix all the ingredients for the filling together in a separate bowl.

Stop the mixer, add the fruit and nut mixture and mix on a very slow speed for just one minute... don't be tempted to mix for longer as you only want to incorporate everything, without squashing the fruit, or you will have a sticky mess!

Very lightly flour your work surface, then use your scraper to lift the dough onto it, so that the smooth 'top' stays facing upwards.





Turn the dough over, so that the sticky side is facing you, then lift the top edge and fold the dough onto itself, press down, fold again and press down.

In one movement lift and turn the dough over and through 90 degrees so the short edge is facing you. Gather up any stray pieces of fruit or nuts and press into the dough, then repeat the folding and pressing two or three more times to build strength into the dough.

Use your scraper to tidy and tuck in the dough all the way round. It will still feel a little sticky from the fruit and rum, so dust the top lightly with flour and also dust a clean bowl.

Lift the dough into the bowl so that the smooth 'top' is facing upwards. Cover with a baking cloth and leave to rest for 1-1½ hours until well risen and some large bubbles appear on the surface. During this time all the flavours of fruit, nuts and rum will have infused into the dough.

TO MAKE THE FRANGIPANE

This is very simple, but the key is to add all the ingredients in a specific order, so in my classes I always tell my students to have everything lined up ready to go, to avoid mistakes!

Start with the butter. With a wooden spoon beat it well until it becomes pale, fluffy, and forms little peaks – a good tip is to spread the butter around the bowl as you beat; this helps it to fluff up more quickly.

Now beat in the sugar, and then add half the ground almonds. Mix in well, then add the rest. Next add half the flour, mix well, then add the remainder.

When the flour is all mixed in, beat in the egg. The dough should be stiff enough to hold its shape on your spoon if you turn it upside down. Add the rum and mix in well.

TO ASSEMBLE

Take the first piece of marzipan, squeeze it gently to soften and roll into a slim sausage shape. Repeat with the remaining pieces.

Lightly flour your work surface.

Use your scraper to run around the edge of the bowl to release the dough and turn it out onto your work surface, sticky side upwards.

Press the dough gently into a rough rectangle.

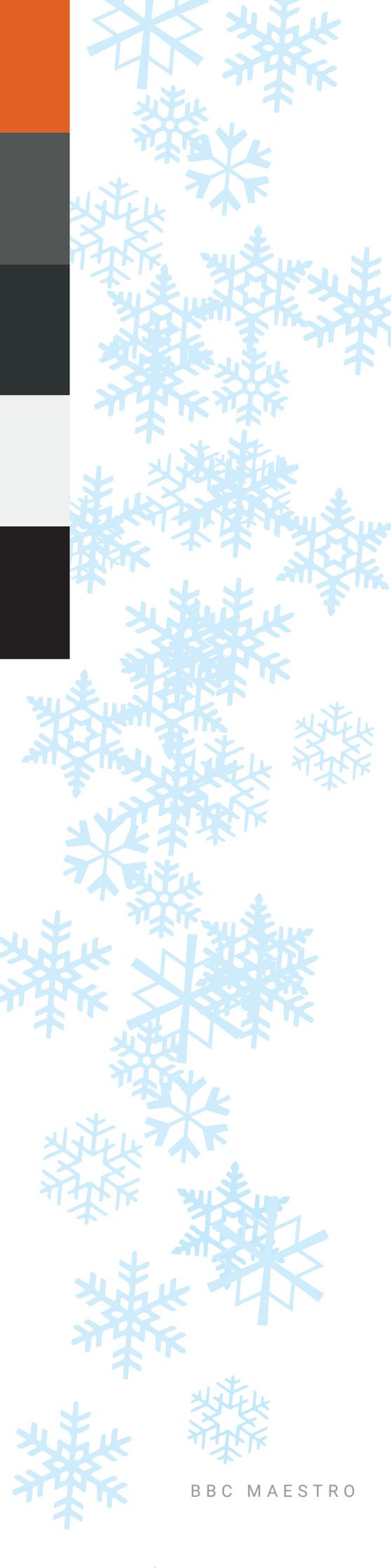
With the long side facing you, fold the top third of the dough into the centre and press down with your fingertips.

Fold the bottom third of the dough over the top, then turn the dough over so that the edge, or seam, is underneath. Dust lightly with flour.

Use your scraper to divide the dough into six pieces of around 220g each.

Lightly flour the work surface again. Take the first piece of dough and flatten it slightly with your fingertips, then lift and stretch it very gently into a rough oval shape.

Turn it over on your work surface so the rough side is facing upwards. Press down again lightly and move it around your work surface to pick up a fine dusting of flour.



Spread a tablespoonful of frangipane over the surface of the dough – don't be tempted to add too much or it may seep out during baking.

Take two of the marzipan 'sausages' and lay one near the top and one near the bottom of the oval of dough and press them in lightly. Take the top edge of the dough and fold it over the first piece of marzipan. Press down with your fingertips.

Turn through 180 degrees and repeat.

Finally turn the dough to face you vertically. Fold in each of the top corners, and then fold the top edge over and press down, so that the end is sealed. Turn through 180 degrees and repeat. Now all the filling should be well sealed in.

Repeat with the rest of the pieces of dough. Have ready three baking trays, lined with baking parchment then lay two shaped stollen on each tray, spaced well apart.

Cover the trays with baking cloths and leave to prove for 1-1½ hours until just under double in volume.

While the stollen are proving beat the egg and salt for the glaze in a small bowl.

Pre heat the oven to 180°C.

When the stollen have proved, brush each one all over in a thin layer of egg wash and then go back and brush with a second thin layer.

Put into your preheated oven (you may need to bake in batches) for about 18-20 minutes, until golden – keep checking on them every 5 minutes.

Take out of the oven and leave to cool down on their trays.

TO FINISH

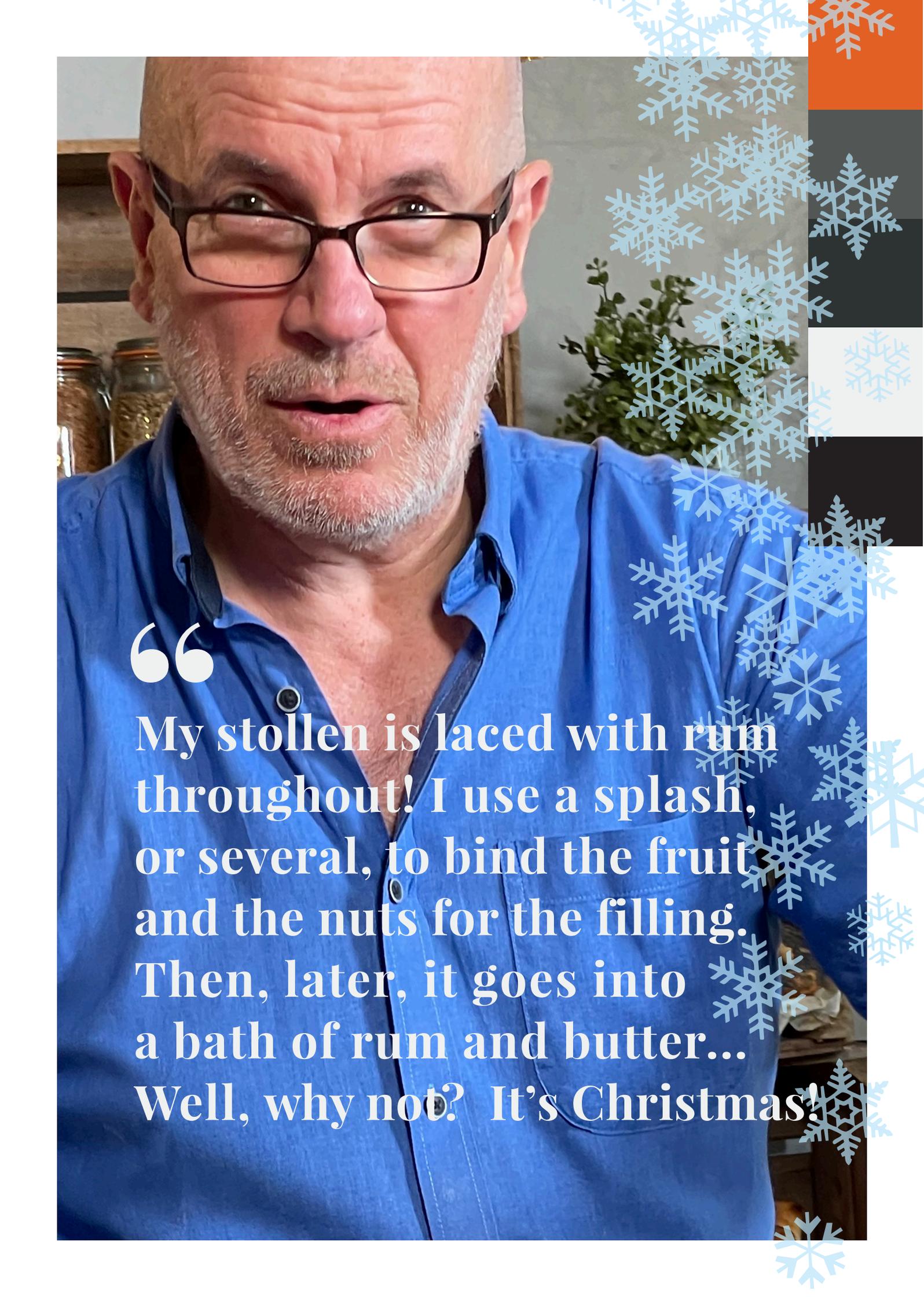
To make the rum glaze, gently melt the butter in a pan on the hob, then whisk in the rum.

Have the icing sugar in a large shallow tray or bowl.

Take each stollen in turn and bathe it in the rum butter so that it is soaked on all sides. Lift out and into the sugar, turning it over so it is completely dusted.

If you want to wrap the stollen to give as gifts or to put some in the freezer, the way I do this is to lay each stollen on a square of wax paper, bring the top and bottom edges together and fold twice, then fold in the corners and tuck them underneath. Then I lift the wrapped stollen onto a square of greaseproof paper and repeat.

Wrapped like this the stollen can happily go into the freezer, but if I am giving them as presents, I wrap them in a third piece of white wrapping paper in exactly the same way, and tie with some festive string – I use red and white butcher's string. Your friends will love unwrapping their gift to find something very special that you have made for them, full of the flavours of the festive season!



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