

Cooking up Culture



Mamma's Rice Cake (Torta di Riso di Mamma)
by Adalberto Alpi



“This moist cake often referred to as ‘Torta di Riso Bolognese’ is a family favourite from my part of Italy, Emilia Romagna. Its history dates back many centuries and traditionally it would be cut into diamond shapes, and we’d eat it only on special occasions together with a glass of Vin Santo!

“Every family has its own personal and tasty version of this cake. As a child, during the war certain ingredients were scarce, especially sugar, which was derived from barbabietola (sugar beet). So you can imagine my delight when my mother was able to make this cake and allow me to clean the bowl.

“Today, making this cake brings back wonderful memories of happy times spent together with my family and friends.”

Ingredients

1 litre of whole milk or almond milk

Lemon rind (a piece), can substitute with orange peel

200g rice (small grain) or Arborio

100g of sugar to be caramelised

50g butter

75g or 8 Amaretti biscuits crushed

4 large eggs

100g sugar

Butter and breadcrumbs to grease the mold

Icing sugar to sprinkle

Method

Bring the milk, with the lemon rind, to a gentle simmer in a large saucepan.

Remove the lemon peel and add the rice and cook gently, stirring every so often until the rice is just soft and has absorbed the milk.

As the rice is cooking, put the sugar in a saucepan on very low heat until it caramelises (about 10 minutes).

Once the rice is cooked, turn off the heat and add the butter, crushed amaretti biscuits and liquid caramelised sugar. Allow to cool completely.

Whip the eggs with the sugar until they are foamy, add the cold rice mixture and very gently incorporate it.

Grease a 24cm diameter mold well with butter, sprinkle it with breadcrumbs and fill it with the mixture (you can also use baking paper).

Bake in a preheated 175°C static oven for approximately 1 hour (until set).

Once cooked, take it out of the oven and let it cool completely, then take it out of the mold and sprinkle it with icing sugar or sprinkle the surface with liqueur. Cut it into cubes or traditional diamond shapes and serve it at room temperature.

Buon appetito!