



# *Bolo rei* - King Cake

By Jeremiah Duarte Bills and adapted from Maria de Lourdes Modesto and João Batalha

This is the quintessential Portuguese holiday bread filled and topped with candied fruit, nuts and dried fruits. It's rich, dense and full of holiday flavor.

## **Dicas (tips):**

- You may skip soaking the fruit in Port in step 1.
- Feel free to substitute the Port or beer in the dough for more orange juice or water.
- Feel free to substitute whatever candied fruit, dried fruit and nuts that you prefer.
- Instead of using the Port wine glaze you may glaze the bread with apricot jam.
- The optional citrus zest doesn't appear in all recipes but they are nice additions if you choose to use some or both.
- To measure half of an egg whisk the egg and then pour out half or weigh half (25 grams).

## **Equipment:**

- Stand mixer and dough hook
- Thermometer
- Rubber spatula
- Baking sheet pan
- Silicone baking mat or parchment paper

Makes one large or two medium sized breads

## **Ingredients:**

### *Frutas* (fruit):

188 grams (1 1/2 cups) crystalized fruit (mixed candied citrus peel, cherries, pineapple, etc, roughly chopped)

75 grams (1/2 cup + 1 tbsp) dried fruits (raisins currants and or figs finely chopped)

15 grams (1 tbsp) Port wine (white Port, aguardente or brandy) for soaking

100 grams (1 cup) toasted nuts (pine nuts, walnuts, sliced or slivered almonds)

### *Fermento* (sponge):

30 grams (3 tbsp + 1 tsp) instant yeast  
1 tbsp all-purpose flour  
30 grams (1/8 cup) orange juice  
30 grams (1/8 cup) water

*Massa* (dough):

15 grams (1 tbsp) Port wine or *aguardente*, or brandy or whisky  
25 grams (1 tbsp + 2 tsp) beer (or more orange juice)  
52 grams (4 tbsp) unsalted butter, room temperature  
75 grams (1/2 + 1/8 cup) sugar  
11 grams (1/2 tbsp) honey  
1 lemon, zested (optional)  
1 orang, zested (optional)  
75 grams (1 1/2 large) egg, room temperature  
375 grams (2 1/2 to 3 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour  
1 tsp fine sea salt

Egg Wash:

50 grams (1 large) egg  
1 tsp water  
Pinch of fine sea salt

Garnish:

4 large pieces of candied fruit (cherries, citrus, papaya, etc.)  
Whole nuts ((almonds (blanched or unblanched, slivered or sliced), walnuts and or pine nuts))  
25 grams (1/8 cup) powdered sugar  
25 grams (1/8 cup) powdered sugar

Glaze:

100 grams (1/2 cup sugar) sugar  
58 grams (1/4 cup) water  
1 to 2 tbsp Port wine

Method:

1. Soak the dried fruits and nuts in the 15 grams (1 tbsp) of Port wine the night before baking or omit this step.
2. The next day combine the orange juice and water in a small saucepan. Heat to 105F/41C to 110F/43C.
3. In a small bowl combine the yeast and 1 tbsp of flour.

4. Add the warm orange juice and water stirring to combine. Set aside until doubled in volume.
5. Place the yeast mixture into the bowl of a stand mixer. Add the remaining dough ingredients. Using the dough hook mix on medium-low to medium speed for 7 to 10 minutes or until smooth and elastic. Scrape down the bowl when necessary. Check for good gluten development by gently stretching a small piece until it's so thin you can almost see through it. If it tears easily it needs more mixing.
6. Cover and allow to rise until doubled. This can take 2 1/2 to 3 or more hours.
7. If you soaked the fruit drain any excess Port from the fruit and nut mixture then using a paper towel dry the fruit and nuts so no excess moisture is added to the dough.
8. Add the fruit and nuts to the dough. Mix with the dough hook on low speed until fully combined.
9. Remove from the bowl and shape into a ball.
10. Use your fingers create a hole in the center to form a ring. Stretch the ring on a silicone mat or parchment lined baking sheet. Alternatively, you may roll the dough into a rectangle, roll into a log starting at the long end and then join the ends to create a ring. Cover and allow to rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 2 1/2 to 3 or more hours.
11. Create the egg wash by combining the egg with a pinch of salt and a tsp of water. Whisk until combined.
12. Brush over the bread and then decorate the dough with candied fruit and whole fruits.
13. Combine the 25 grams (1/8 cup) of sugar and 25 grams (1/8 cup) powdered sugar with a few drops of water and place decoratively on the dough in mounds or stripes.
14. Preheat oven to 350F/180C.
15. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until the internal temperature is between 180F/82C and 190F/88C. If the top is over-browning cover with foil or place an oven rack and sheet pan above. Make the glaze while the bread is baking.
16. Place on a cooling rack.
17. While the bread is still warm generously brush all over with the Port wine glaze avoiding the sugar mounds. Allow to cool completely before enjoying.

#### Glaze:

1. Combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan. You may add a cinnamon stick and a strip of citrus peel for extra flavor if you wish.
2. Bring to a boil stirring until the sugar dissolves.
3. Once the sugar has dissolved and the mixture comes to a boil remove from the heat and add the Port wine. Allow to cool slightly before using.