

Prep Time: 45 minutes (plus overnight soaking and 2 hours rising)

Cook Time: 50-60 minutes

Total Time: Approx. 4 hours active + overnight + cooling

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Ingredients

For the Fruit & Nut Soak:

- 200g (1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cups) raisins
- 100g ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) currants
- 100g ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) candied orange peel, finely chopped
- 100g ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) candied lemon peel, finely chopped
- 100ml ($\frac{1}{3}$ cup + 1 tbsp) dark rum or brandy (or orange juice for an alcohol-free version)

- 100g ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) whole almonds, roughly chopped
- 50g ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) walnuts, roughly chopped

For the Dough:

- 500g (4 cups) all-purpose flour, plus extra for dusting
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cardamom
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 packet (7g / 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp) active dry yeast
- 150ml ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) whole milk, lukewarm
- 100g ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature

- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 200g (1 cup minus 2 tbsp) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tbsp dark rum or brandy (optional)
- Zest of 1 lemon

For the Almond Paste Filling:

- 200g (7 oz) almond paste (marzipan)
- 1-2 tbsp rum or water

For the Finishing Touch:

- 100g (½ cup) unsalted butter, melted
- 100g (1 cup) powdered sugar

Instructions

Part 1: Preparation (The Day Before)

1. **Soak the Fruit:** In a large bowl, combine the raisins, currants, candied orange peel, and candied lemon peel. Pour the rum (or orange juice) over the fruit and stir well. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let it soak overnight at room temperature. This step is crucial for plump, flavorful fruit.
2. **Toast the Nuts:** The next day, preheat your oven to 160°C (320°F). Spread the chopped almonds and walnuts on a baking sheet and toast for 5-7 minutes, until fragrant. Set aside to cool completely.

Part 2: Making the Dough (Day Of)

1. **Activate the Yeast:** In the bowl of a stand mixer (or a large bowl if mixing by hand), combine the lukewarm milk and one tablespoon of the sugar. Sprinkle the yeast over the top and let it sit for 5-10 minutes until foamy.
2. **Mix the Dry Ingredients:** In a separate large bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, cinnamon, cardamom, and nutmeg.
3. **Form the Dough:** Add the remaining sugar, eggs, vanilla extract, and lemon zest to the yeast mixture. Mix to combine. Gradually add the flour mixture, beating on low speed (or stirring with a wooden spoon) until a shaggy dough forms.
4. **Knead the Dough:** Switch to the dough hook attachment (or turn the dough out onto a floured surface) and knead for 5-7 minutes. The dough will be sticky.

5. Incorporate the Butter: With the mixer running on medium-low, add the softened butter, one tablespoon at a time. Continue to knead for another 5-8 minutes until the butter is fully incorporated and the dough is smooth and elastic. If kneading by hand, this will take about 10-12 minutes. The dough should pull away from the sides of the bowl but still be quite soft.
6. Add the Fruit and Nuts: Drain the soaked fruit (discard any excess liquid) and gently fold it into the dough along with the toasted nuts. Mix on low speed just until everything is evenly distributed. Be careful not to overmix.
7. First Rise: Shape the dough into a ball, place it in a lightly greased bowl, and cover with plastic wrap or a clean kitchen towel. Let it rise in a warm, draft-free place for 1 to 1.5 hours, or until doubled in size.

Part 3: Shaping and Baking

1. Prepare the Almond Paste: Divide the almond paste in half. On a lightly floured surface, roll each half into a log about 20cm (8 inches) long and 2cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch) thick. If it's too stiff, knead in a little rum or water to soften it.
2. Shape the Stollen: Punch down the risen dough and divide it in half. On a lightly floured surface, roll each half into an oval about 25x30cm (10x12 inches). Place one almond paste log down the center of each oval.
3. Form the Classic Shape: Fold one long side of the dough over the almond paste, bringing it about two-thirds of the way across. Press the seam gently to seal. Use the side of your hand or a rolling pin to press a deep crease down the center, creating the classic "hump" shape of a stollen.

4. Second Rise: Carefully transfer the loaves to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Cover loosely with a towel and let them rise for another 45-60 minutes, until puffy.
5. Bake: Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Bake the stollen for 50-60 minutes. If the tops are browning too quickly, tent them loosely with aluminum foil after 30 minutes. The stollen is done when a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean and the internal temperature reaches 85°C (185°F).
6. The Finishing Touch: As soon as the stollen comes out of the oven, brush the entire surface generously with the melted butter. It will seem like a lot, but the bread will absorb it. Immediately dust the loaves heavily with powdered sugar. Let them cool completely on a wire rack.

Part 4: Storage & Serving

- Storage: Once completely cool, wrap the stollen tightly in plastic wrap and then in aluminum foil. Store in a cool, dark place for at least 1 week, or up to 4 weeks. This allows the flavors to meld and mature. The stollen will become more moist and flavorful with time.
- Serving: Dust with fresh powdered sugar before serving. Slice into thick pieces and enjoy with a cup of coffee or a glass of mulled wine.

Nutrition Information (Estimated per serving)

This recipe makes approximately 20 slices.

- Calories: 320
- Protein: 5g
- Carbohydrates: 38g
- Fat: 16g
- Saturated Fat: 7g
- Fiber: 2g
- Sugar: 18g
- Sodium: 70mg