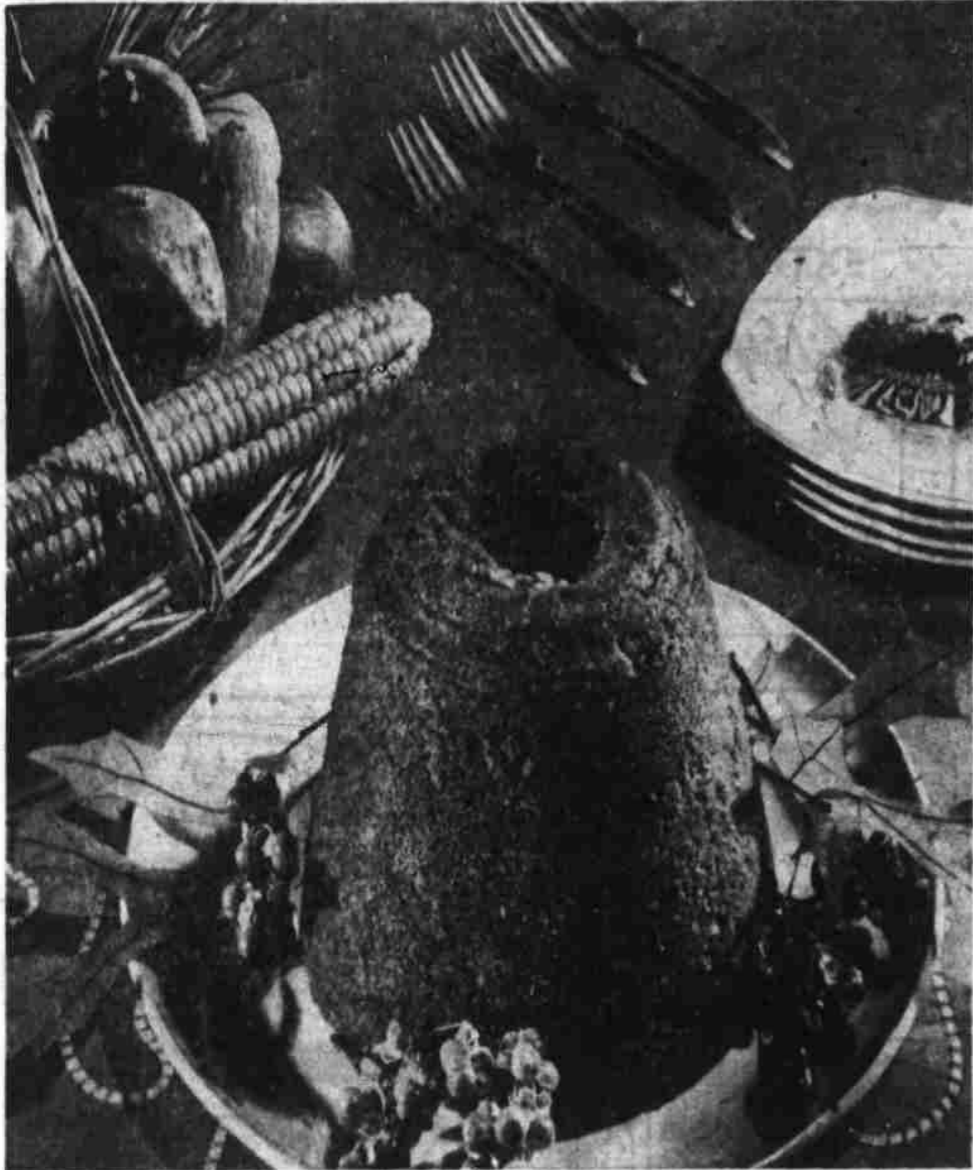


# The Big Four In holiday baking



Christmas puddings, like fruit cakes and cookies, should be made ahead for convenience and blending of flavors. Here the pudding features dried figs and bran cereal. Serve either warm or cold.



Climaxing pre-holiday baking is the rich, long-keeping fruit cake, which a fry well set-up household should have on hand at Christmas time. Fortunately the cake is better after it stands awhile, this making it practical to bake it up weeks ahead. Here is a nicely decorated cake.

By MAXINE BUREN  
Statesman Woman's Editor

Christmas baking, even to the modern housewife, is something that takes time, enthusiasm and good recipes. The cook usually tries to get fruit cakes, cookies, and steamed puddings out of the way, partly to facilitate last minute Christmas work, and also because they are better upon standing.

We've discussed recipes for fruit cakes in these columns already this year, but let's talk puddings and holiday breads.

Traditional climax to a festive Christmas dinner is the serving of a plump steamed pudding, rich with figs, citron and aromatic spices. This steamed fig pudding (which you may like to buy) has all these attributes, plus the goodness of whole bran cereal which lends its own rich nutty flavor and interesting texture. Serve the pudding either warm or cold with whipped cream or hard sauce.



## Steamed Fig Pudding

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1/2 cup whole bran cereal       | 1 teaspoon salt                    |
| 1 cup finely cut figs           | 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon              |
| 2 tablespoons finely cut citron | 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg                |
| 1 cup finely chopped suet       | 1 1/2 cups coarse dry bread crumbs |
| 1 tablespoon molasses           | 3/4 cup sugar                      |
| 1 teaspoon baking soda          | 2 eggs, slightly beaten            |

Crush bran slightly. Combine with remaining ingredients, mixing thoroughly. Spread in greased 1-quart mold. Cover tightly. Steam about 2 hours. Serve warm or cold with whipped cream or hard sauce. Yield: 8 servings.

Fruit-filled coffee cake is a delight any time, and during the holidays it's as welcome as greeting cards in the mailbox. This Christmas Fruit Ring (which by all means should be served to the family as a Christmas preview) has about as much filling as dough, which makes it especially good—worthy of being included in the biggest, and best, baking spree of the year. Here's how to make it: Sweet yeast dough and a prune and orange marmalade filling are rolled just as you'd shape a jelly roll. Form into a ring on a cookie sheet, clip with scissors (This is fun!) and pull apart to let the good, gooey filling peek through.

## Christmas Fruit Ring

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Dough:</b>                     | <b>Filling:</b>                         |
| 1 cake compressed yeast           | 1 cup cooked prunes                     |
| 2 tablespoons warm water          | 1/4 cup butter or margarine             |
| 1/2 cup milk                      | 1/4 cup chopped, blanched almonds       |
| 2 tablespoons butter or margarine | 1/4 cup sugar                           |
| 2 tablespoons sugar               | 1/4 cup orange marmalade or apricot jam |
| 1 teaspoon salt                   | Powdered sugar frosting                 |
| 1 egg                             |   |
| 2 cups sifted all-purpose flour   |   |

**Dough:** Soften yeast in water. Scald milk; remove from heat and stir in butter, sugar and salt. When lukewarm, add beaten egg and yeast. Stir in flour gradually, beating until smooth dough forms. Turn out on floured board; knead lightly; cover and let rest 15 minutes. Roll to a 6x10-inch rectangle. Spread with filling. Roll as for jelly roll, starting from long side. Shape on greased cookie sheet into wreath, securing ends firmly by brushing with milk and pressing together. Clip 1/4-inch apart with floured scissors, separating chips by pulling one to left; one to right, and one to center. Cover and let rise in warm place until almost doubled in bulk. Bake in moderately hot oven (375 degrees) about 15 or 20 minutes. Cool. Drizzle with powdered sugar frosting.

**Filling:** Pit prunes. Combine butter, almonds, sugar and marmalade in saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring, and cook until thick—about 5 minutes. Add prunes; set aside to cool. Makes one large coffee ring.

## Hot Rolls With Yeast Simple

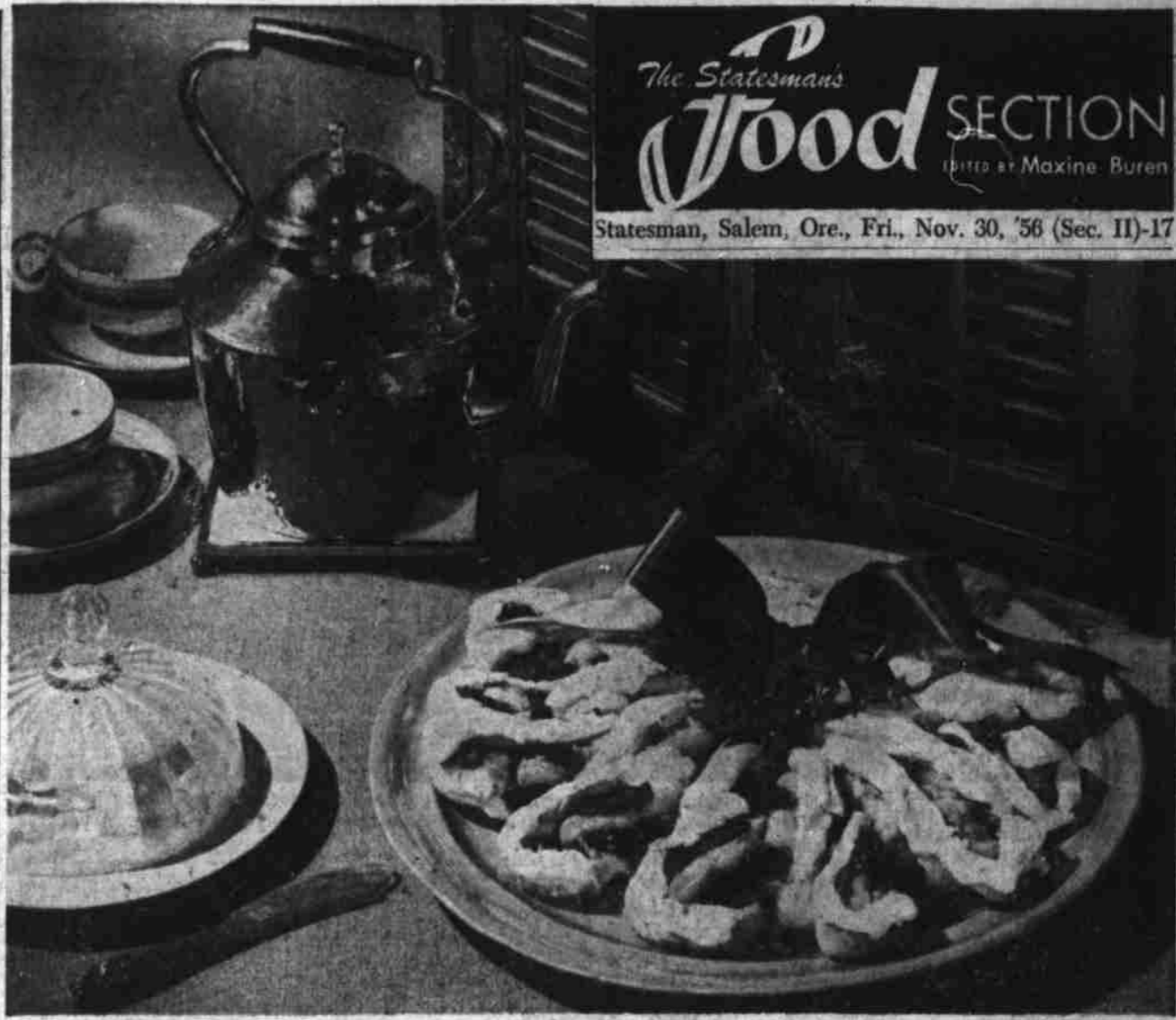
Hot breads are always welcome, and they're fun to make, too. Here we have one using cheese for a little oomph.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>CHEESE ROLLS</b>                                    |  |
| 1/2 cup milk   | 1 cup lukewarm water                                   |
| 2 tablespoons shortening                               | 1 package active dry yeast, or 1 cake compressed yeast |
| 1/4 cup sugar  | 4 cups all-purpose flour                               |
| 2 1/2 teaspoons salt                                   | 1 1/2 cups shredded cheese                             |
| 1 package active dry yeast, or 1 cake compressed yeast |  |
| 4 cups all-purpose flour                               |  |
| 1 1/2 cups shredded cheese                             |  |

Scald milk; add shortening, sugar, and salt, and cool to lukewarm. Place water in a large bowl; add yeast. Stir after 10 minutes. Combine milk and yeast mixtures; add 2 cups flour and beat well. Add more flour to make a soft dough; blend in the cheese.

Turn out dough on a lightly floured board and knead until smooth and satiny (or mix in mixer at low speed for 12 minutes). Form dough into smooth ball. Place in a greased bowl and turn so as to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place for about 1 hour or until doubled in size. Shape dough into rolls; place on lightly greased pans and let rise until doubled in size. Bake at 400 F. (Hot oven) for 10 minutes. Two and one-half dozen 1-ounce rolls.

**KEEP IT DRY**  
Humidity affects the moisture content of flour; yeast-bread recipes usually take this into account by calling for an approximate amount of flour.



Rich, sweet breads practically shout "Christmas!", and here's a filled one that speaks the loudest. We suggest you try it on the family, who will be delighted. There's almost as much filling as bread, and that is what makes it so good.

## SANDWICH IDEA

A cluster of seedless grapes, a fresh pear half or some wedges of red-skinned apple help to make a luncheon sandwich look and taste good. The fruit will be delicious with a filling of ham, chicken or cheese.

## Noodle Bake is Onion Flavored

Onions, pepper and pimiento season the sauce that goes over noodles in this baked dish.

## QUICK FRANK-NOODLE BAKE

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 4 ounces egg noodle bows               | 1/2 cup butter or margarine                                    |
| 2 tablespoons shortening               | 1/4 cup chopped green pepper                                   |
| 4 frankfurters, cut in 1/2-inch slices | 1 1/2 cups condensed cream of mushroom soup (10 1/2-ounce can) |
| 1/2 cup chopped onion                  | 1 cup warm water   |
| 1/4 cup chopped green pepper           | 1/4 cup buttered bread crumbs                                  |
| 1 1/2 cups chopped pimiento            | 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese                           |

Add 2 teaspoons salt and noodles to 3 cups boiling water. Boil rapidly, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes. Cover, remove from heat and let stand 10 minutes. Meanwhile, melt shortening in skillet. Add frankfurters and brown lightly on all sides, stirring occasionally. Add onion and green pepper and cook about 3 minutes longer. Mix pimiento, soup and water. Rinse noodles with warm water and drain well. Turn into greased 1 1/2-quart casserole. Turn frankfurters and soup mixture into casserole. Mix lightly. Mix bread crumbs and cheese. Sprinkle over top of casserole. Bake in moderate oven (350 F.) about 25 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

## Winter Casserole Takes Meat, Soup

Flavorful celery, green pepper and onions combine with pork and noodles in a casserole that is perfect for supper. Made with cheddar cheese, corn and tomato soup, it is a hearty dish that definitely keeps the family budget in mind.

## WINTER CASSEROLE

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 1/2 pounds bulk pork sausage           | 1/2 cup finely chopped onion            |
| 1/2 cup finely chopped celery            | 1/2 cup finely chopped celery           |
| Water                                    |   |
| 1 7-ounce can whole kernel corn, drained | 1 2-ounce can sliced mushrooms, drained |
| 1 2-ounce can sliced mushrooms, drained  | 1/2 cup grated cheddar cheese           |
| 1/2 cup tomato soup, undiluted           | 1/2 medium green pepper, chopped        |
| 2 cups raw broad noodles                 |   |

Roll sausage in tiny balls; brown in their own fat. Remove sausage and drain off most of the fat. Add onion and celery, brown slightly, then add water to cover. Replace sausage balls and add corn, mushrooms, cheese, tomato soup and green pepper. Measure noodles; boil until tender, drain. Combine cooked meat mixture with noodles. Place in large casserole and bake at 300 F. for 1 1/2 hours. Serves 8 to 10.

## YUMMY

Skillet-cooked raw shrimp peeled and deveined; in butter, chill powder and crushed garlic. Serve with French bread for dunking.

## ADD SCOOPS

Serve fresh fruit cup as a first course or a dessert, either way, it will taste especially good if it surrounds scoops of fruit sherbet.



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## Little Lifts to Help Routine

An occasional novel idea, or even an old one brought to mind, helps in the three-meals-a-day routine.

Prepare pie filling using a package of vanilla pudding mix according to package direction, using 1/2 cup less liquid. Fold in whipped cream, 1/4 cup drained crushed pineapple and 1/4 cup sliced cooked prunes. Turn into baked pie shell and chill until firm. Garnish with shaved chocolate.

Well drained canned fruit cocktail topped with sour cream and crystallized ginger is a simple but very luscious dessert. Pass a plate of petits fours when it's a company menu.

Small sacks of raisins and corn candy done up with orange and black paper ribbon and Halloween stickers make an easy treat to fix for the trick-or-treat masqueraders.

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