

## Tradition of Christmas cakes and puddings

The origins of Christmas are found in festivities with an abundance of meals. In the earlier years, as soon as the weather got cold, pigs, calves and poultry were carved up into different cuts of meat. Fillets, cutlets, hams and pigs' knuckles and trotters, together with cheeses, were buried in the snow or stored in the root cellar, a sort of cold room. Some meats were pickled in stoneware jars, some were smoked. This was not only for winter, this was early preparation for the Christmas festivities.

One of the oldest Christmas dishes known is mince pie, which originated in the Middle Ages. The original recipe contained a mixture of finely chopped poultry, pheasant, partridge and rabbit. Later, sugar, apples, raisins and candied oranges and lemons were added. Over time, the meats were eliminated leaving only the sweet ingredients, introducing the "traditional" **Christmas pudding**.



The traditional Christmas plum pudding

Fruit cake, stollen and log cake are part of the Christmas tradition, served on Christmas eve or offered as gifts.

The famous, typically English Christmas pudding was called a "hackin" from its many ingredients. By the 17th Century, when more sweets were added, it became the plum pudding, often prepared on Christmas morning, and sprinkled with brandy and flamed when served.

The traditional **Christmas fruit cake** is a derivative of the Christmas pudding. It includes raisins, dates, nuts and candied fruit, also forgetting the generous helping of brandy or rum.

