

# Getting Into the Holiday Spirits



Golden Egnog Cupcake

## Desserts with a Touch of Something Extra

**W**hy not add a little extra figgy to your pudding this year? We're deep into the holidays now, which means it's also high dessert season. Gatherings will undoubtedly include sweet bites, so consider making yours more memorable by adding a dash of liquor to the recipe.

Introducing spirits to the classics can reveal additional dimensions and flavors, but experts warn that too much liqueur can overwhelm or mask desired elements. Whether it's brandy, bourbon, rum or cream liqueurs, consider it akin to adding a dash of an extract – as something that can surprise with unexpected sweetness or flavors.

**Whether you're hosting in your own home or traveling, it's good form to have something sweet ready to offer. Start with a pair of sweet recipes from King Arthur Flour, which operates from its headquarters in Norwich, Vermont.**

### ON OUR COVER

#### Cranberry Moscow Mule

*courtesy wonkywonderful.com*

- Juice from ½ squeezed lime
- 2 ounces sweetened cranberry juice
- 2 ounces vodka
- 4 ounces ginger beer or ginger ale
- Ice
- Lime wedges and cranberries to garnish

Fill copper mug with ice. Combine lime juice, cranberry juice, vodka and ginger beer in mug. Stir. Garnish with lime wedges and fresh cranberries.



### Golden Egnog Cupcakes

*Courtesy King Arthur Flour • Yield: 2 dozen cupcakes*

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|---|--|
| 1½ cups (24 tablespoons) unsalted butter, at room temperature       | 4 large eggs                                     |
| 2 cups sugar  | ¼ cup dark rum or brandy                         |
| ½ teaspoon grated nutmeg  | 3½ cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour |
| 1 teaspoon salt; reduce to ¼ teaspoon salt if you use salted butter | 2 teaspoons baking powder                        |
|   | 1¼ cups eggnog                                   |

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Line two standard muffin pans with cupcake papers or tulip muffin papers.

Beat together butter, sugar, nutmeg, salt and eggnog flavor until light and fluffy. Beat eggs in one at a time, beating well after each addition, and scraping bottom and sides of the bowl. Stir in rum or brandy. Whisk flour and baking powder together. Beat in half the flour mixture, then half the cream. Repeat, being sure to scrape the bottom and sides of the mixing bowl occasionally. Spoon ½ cup of batter into each of the prepared cups.

Bake the cakes for 28-30 minutes, rotating pans halfway through. When done, the top of a cupcake should bounce back when lightly touched, and a toothpick inserted into the center of one of the cupcakes in the middle of the pan should come out clean, or with just a few moist crumbs clinging to it.

Remove the pans from the oven. Cool the cakes in the pans for 10 minutes then turn them out onto racks to cool completely. If you're going to ice them, wait until they're completely cool to do so.

## Caribbean Rum Cake

Courtesy King Arthur Flour

### Rum Cake Base

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|---|--|
| 2 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour | ½ cup pastry cream filling mix or instant vanilla pudding mix, dry |
| 1½ cups sugar                                   | 2 teaspoons baking powder  |
| ½ cup unsalted butter, softened                 | 1 teaspoon salt  |
|   | ½ cup vegetable oil  |

### Rum Soaking Syrup

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|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| ½ cup unsalted butter | ½ cup white or golden rum |
| ¼ cup water           | ½ teaspoon vanilla        |
| 1 cup sugar           |                           |

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spritz a 10 to 12 cup Bundt pan with cooking spray. Sprinkle on pecan or almond flour and turn pan to coat evenly.

Place all cake ingredients except rum, vanilla and butter rum flavoring in bowl of stand mixer and blend on medium speed for two minutes. Scrape down bowl after one minute. Add rum, vanilla and flavoring (if using) to batter and blend for another minute. Pour batter into prepared Bundt pan and spread level with a spatula.

Bake cake for 50-55 minutes. You may smell the nut flour toasting at first. When done, the cake will test clean on a cake tester. Leave cake in pan to cool slightly while you make the soaking syrup.

In a medium-sized saucepan combine syrup ingredients, except vanilla. Bring to a rapid boil then reduce to a simmer and cook for about 5 to 8 minutes, until syrup thickens slightly. Remove from heat and stir-in vanilla.

Pour about one quarter of the syrup over cake (still in the pan). Allow syrup to soak in. Repeat until all syrup is used. Cover pan loosely with plastic wrap and allow cake to sit out overnight to cool completely and soak in syrup. When ready to serve, loosen edges of cake and invert on to your serving plate. Serve with hot coffee or tea. The cake is very moist, fragrant and freezes very well.

**Optional:** Decorate top of cake with powdered sugar and add a ring of maraschino cherries before serving.



As pecan pie recipes go, this one is quite simple. Add-in the perfect complimentary flavors of bourbon and you may have whipped up a new family favorite. This version substitutes healthier Vermont maple syrup, in place of corn syrup.

### Dark Chocolate Bourbon Pecan Pie

Courtesy spoonuniversity.com

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3 tablespoons butter, melted    | ¾ cup pure maple syrup        |
| 3 eggs, beaten                  | 3 tablespoons bourbon whiskey |
| ½ cup brown sugar               | 1½ cups pecan halves          |
| 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour | ½ cup dark chocolate chips    |
| 1 teaspoon vanilla extract      | 1 (9-inch) unbaked pie shell  |

Preheat oven to 350. Melt butter in a small saucepan. In a medium bowl, add beaten eggs. Stir in brown sugar, flour, vanilla, maple syrup and bourbon until combined. Add melted butter. Mix in the pecans and chocolate chips until combined. Pour mixture into pie shell. Place shell on sheet tray and bake in the oven for 50-60 minutes.



As if the traditional, well-known holidays weren't enough reason to indulge, there are a few lesser-known excuses to prompt some creative baking. For example: December 8 is National Brownie Day. Why not improve the classic with a touch of rum?

### Rum Brownies with Salted Caramel Rum Sauce

*Courtesy tattooedmartha.com*

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter  
3 ounces semi-sweet chocolate  
½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
2 cups sugar  
½ teaspoon coarse salt  
½ tablespoon vanilla extract  
3 eggs  
1½ cups all-purpose flour  
½ cup Sailor Jerry Rum

#### For caramel sauce:

½ cup sugar  
1 ½ tablespoons water  
¼ cup cream  
1 ounce Sailor Jerry Rum  
Coarse sea salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and butter a 13-by-9-inch baking pan. Place butter and semi-sweet chocolate in a medium sized sauce pan and heat on low. Stir every few minutes until completely melted and smooth. Remove from heat and stir in cocoa powder, sugar, salt and vanilla. Beat in eggs one at a time until completely mixed in. Stir in flour and then rum until completely mixed.

Using a rubber spatula, scrape batter into prepared baking dish and smooth the top. Place in the oven to bake for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Place on a cooling rack for 1-2 hours on until completely cooled. I usually like to refrigerate mine so they cut easier.

While waiting on the brownies to cook and cool, start on the caramel sauce: Add sugar and water to a small sauce pan and bring to a boil over high heat. Do not stir. Boil the syrup for 6-8 minutes or until a deep amber caramel forms. Remove from heat and stir-in cream. Add Sailor Jerry Rum and stir until combined. Pour the caramel sauce into a large mug or heatproof cup and let it cool slightly. Place in the microwave or on top of the stove to keep slightly warm. When ready to use, drizzle on top of the brownies and then sprinkle sea salt on top.