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## The art of making Birnenbrot (pear loaf)

This is one of many yummy recipes for this traditional Swiss delicacy and it has been proven to be very popular right here in NZ. A specialty made by Verena Vetsch and shared with her special friends. It is a traditional recipe from Canton Glarus. The recipe is for three loaves of about 600g each.

### Filling ingredients

- 400g dried pears (see below)
- 250mls light red wine
- 150g figs
- 150g dates
- 150g prunes
- 100g each of raisins, sultanas and chopped mixed peel
- 100g raw sugar
- Rind of one lemon
- 1tsp cinnamon
- 1tbsp mixed spice (Birnenbrot spice-cloves, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, coriander, mace)
- 200mls Kirsch or schnapps
- 100mls rosewater
- 100g each of almonds, hazelnuts and walnuts
- Egg yolk and milk for glazing

Put pears and wine in a bowl, cover it and soak overnight. Then steam it until soft for about 20 minutes. Add figs, prunes and dates. This mixture needs to be finely chopped or mixed in food processor. Add rest of the ingredients above except for the three sorts of nuts and mix well (photo 1).

**Zopf dough:** need to make 1.3kg of Zopf dough – see below  
500 g of this dough has to be mixed in with the fruit mass (photo 2). Mix it thor-

oughly by hand. Add the nuts to the fruit and zopf mixture and mix well (photo 3). Divide the mix into three to make 3 x 20 cm long loaves (photo 4).

Take a third of the remaining Zopf dough and roll it to a rectangle of about 30 x 25cm (photo 5). Place some fruit mixture in the middle of the square and cut the dough corners out. Moisten the edges of the dough sheet and wrap the sheet around the fruit loaf.

Place finished loaf on tray with baking paper with the dough joint facing down. Brush egg yolk thinned with a bit of milk over the top and pierce with fork (photo 6). Repeat two more times for the other two loaves. Bake for 45 minutes at 200 degrees C.

**Drying pears:** cut pears into slices, leave skin on but remove stem, core etc. These thin slices can be sundried, dehydrator dried or in the oven at about 30- 40 degrees C until “soft dry”. Pears should NOT be totally dry. Freeze them unless you use them straight away.

### Zopf Dough:

- 750g flour
- 1.5 tsp salt
- 90g butter
- 450mls milk
- 7tsp Surebake yeast.

Put yeast and flour in bottom of bread-maker and add salt to top of flour. Melt butter and add milk and pour over flour mixture and set on dough cycle. Can be made by hand and let dough rise in a warm place for at least an hour. Important to have yeast and salt separate, otherwise yeast does not rise.

*Recipe: Hans & Verena Vetsch with Anita Zuber*

