

Several years ago we visited the Cayman Islands and a high point was visiting the Tortuga Rum Cake bakery. The aromas were wonderful, the baking process was very interesting and the free samples were all delicious. We all preferred the original version, so we took half a dozen cakes home with us. They made excellent desserts on special occasions, and everyone we gave one to was generous in their praise.

This sampler makes a very good gift for someone who hasn't already enjoyed these cakes. We strongly prefer the [Tortuga Rum Cake Original 16oz](#), but of course your mileage may vary, and this sampler is the way to decide which you prefer.

The cake sells for double the price here in the States compared with the price in the Caymans as you would expect. But there are a couple of ways to reduce costs. Each December over the past several years the company has offered a holiday discount (\$5.00 this year and free shipping).

These cakes keep very well frozen -- we've done so for over two years -- the alcohol seems to help preserve them. They also keep for several months in our 55 degree wine cellar. So, it makes sense for us to stock up once a year; it's great to have them on hand for special meals or for an unanticipated need for a present for someone.

Their long shelf life reduces the need to try to duplicate these cakes in your own oven. There are a number of imitative recipes online; I tried this one last year just for the fun of it, and it came out almost as good as one from the Caymans.

Either home made or web bought, these are delicious and very welcome gifts.

Robert C. Ross 2009

From Epicurean:

I don't believe there is a way to get the authentic recipe. This recipe for rum cake originated from the owners of the Tortuga Rum Company Limited over one hundred years ago, and it has been passed down through the family generation after generation. Made with a special Tortuga gold blend of rum that is not bottled or available to the public.

You can probably approximate it with this recipe, by using a very good, very dark rum.

Ingredients:

1 cup chopped walnuts
1 box yellow cake mix
1 small package instant vanilla pudding mix
1/4 cup water
3/4 cup dark rum (Tortuga Dark preferably)
1/2 cup oil
4 eggs

Secret Sauce

1/4 cup water
1/4 cup dark rum
1 cup sugar
1 stick oleo (butter)

Directions:

Preheat oven at 325 F.
Grease and flour a bundt pan
Sprinkle walnuts over the bottom of the pan.
Blend dry cake mix, dry pudding mix, water, rum, oil and eggs for 2 minutes. Pour over walnuts in pan. Bake for 1 hour
Prepare Secret sauce 10 minutes before cake is finished baking.
Combine water rum, water sugar and butter in to sauce pan. Heat over medium heat, stirring until boiling. Boil for 2 minutes stirring occasionally. Remove cake from oven.
While in pan, gently stab cake with sharp knife.
Slowly pour sauce over cake (will look like too much sauce, but cake will absorb it)
Let the cake cool in the pan for 30 minutes before removing from pan.