

# JANE PARKER SPANISH BAR CAKE REVIEW

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We take a look at the return of the Jane Parker Spanish Bar Cake. This cake was made popular by the A&P Food Stores many years back. It disappeared for a while, but now, it's back.



Jane Parker, a name well known for its fruitcakes, now brings back the very popular Spanish Bar Cake. We test it out and share our results with you. Let's take a look.

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## SPANISH BAR CAKE REVIEW

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If names like the A&P, Jane Parker, or Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company do not ring any bells for you, then you're a youngster. Just too young to remember. Smile.

I'm not a youngster, and I grew up in the era when all of these were household names. A&P Grocery stores were pretty much everywhere in my area back then, and they were very innovative stores in changing the way people shopped for groceries.

If you've never heard of the Jane Parker Spanish Bar Cake, allow me a minute or two to share a bit of background on the cake and then we'll share a bit about how this cake has just recently returned to production using the original recipe from years back. I'll try to be brief, but as you may know, that's not easy for me.

A&P Grocery stores began as the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company back around 1859 up in New York City. By the 1930's, they had changed the name to just A&P, and had some 16,000 stores across the United States. They began to lose their footing in the grocery business to newer stores around the years of 1973-1974 and lots of stores were closing. In 1979, they were sold.

Jane Parker was an in-house brand of the A&P stores during their heyday. The company had it's own group of bakeries that baked the famous Jane Parker Fruitcakes, the Spanish Bar Cakes, doughnuts, bread, and other baked goods. This was a first for grocery stores back in the day and A&P ruled the

market for many years.

As more modern stores came along, A&P didn't keep up and eventually went out of business.

My older brother worked with our local A&P store for many years, going from shelf stocker to eventually being a store manager. Later, he ended up owning about 4 grocery stores of his own (not A&P stores) and spent about 50 years in the grocery business.

My brother often talked about the Spanish Bar Cakes, telling me that when he would be stocking shelves in his younger days, he would often grab a Spanish Bar Cake at his break time and said he could eat about half of one of those cakes during his breaks. Obviously, he liked them.

The subject of these cakes came up many times, and back in November of 2014, I attempted to make one of the spice cakes for him just to see if I could come close. You can see my version of it here: [\*\*Spanish Bar Cake Recipe\*\*](#).

He was kind and told me the cake was good, and brought back some memories of the Jane Parker version, but my cake just wasn't the same. Oh well, at least I'd tried. Smile. And, if you search the Internet, you'll see that many other folks have tried to re-create the cake as well. Some even claimed to have the original recipe for it.

As it would turn out, a couple of brothers up in New York ended up purchasing the Jane Parker brand name and some of their recipes a few years back when some of the assets of the A&P chain were being auctioned off.

Chris Ronacher and his brother Alex had been selling the Jane Parker Fruitcakes online for several years through a candy business they owned at the time. While the return of the Jane Parker Fruitcakes did well for them, many folks kept asking if they would ever again sell the Spanish Bar Cakes.

In 2017, Chris reached out to me via Taste of Southern to tell me about the return of the fruitcakes. He had found me through my attempt to make the Spanish Bar Cake. I thought that was pretty cool.

Chris sent me a couple of the fruitcakes, and we even gave a couple of them away here on Taste of Southern. I did a review for those back in 2017.

Chris informed me back then that they were working on bringing the Original Jane Parker Spanish Bar Cakes back using the original recipes. I shared the info with my brother and he was excited to hear about the possibility.

Fast forward to today. The original recipe Jane Parker Spanish Bar Cakes – ARE BACK.

Chris sent my brother and me some small samples of the cake many months back. Then, just a week or so ago, he sent us both one of the Spanish Bar Cakes to enjoy and for me to review here on Taste of Southern.

There's a lot more to the story, but I've already typed a bunch of information, so let's proceed with the review, okay?

My brother told me that as soon as he saw the cake Chris had sent him, that they had "nailed it" as he put it.

He said the cake tasted just the way he remembered it and that it sure did bring back lots of great memories for him of his days with A&P groceries. He very much liked the cake.

I don't have those memories of the cake like he does, because I was much younger at the time. Still, a good cake is a good cake, and I think you're going to like the Original Recipe Spanish Bar Cake.

The cake is available for order NOW on the [JaneParker.com](http://JaneParker.com) website. They take orders for the cakes and are currently running about 5 to 8 weeks on delivery. Chris and his brother are just beginning to produce this cake once again and their goal is to eventually get it into lots of grocery stores across the country. Currently, the Jane Parker Fruitcakes are being made available in about 250 stores across America with hopes to continue to expand that as well.

So, ready to take a look at this Spanish Bar Cake? Alright then, let's head to the kitchen, and... Let's Get Slicing!

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Your 18oz Spanish Bar Cake will arrive in a plastic clamshell container.

Hopefully, one day you'll be able to purchase these directly in your local grocery store. That's the plan at least. But, for now, you'll have to order the cake online from JaneParker.com.

Orders are being taken and delivery will follow a few weeks later as production of the cake is currently on a limited basis. But, rest assured, you'll get a very fresh Spanish Bar Cake when you order it.

Each cake is being shipped in a corrugated cardboard box that has a Styrofoam lining inside. You'll also find a frozen re-useable gel pack in the bottom of the box, with the cake inside the clamshell container on top, then another frozen gel pack on top of that.

The gel packs keep the cake fresh during it's shipping to your home. Shipping is included in the price

of the cake on the Jane Parker website.

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You may catch a whiff of the spice cake before you open the clamshell, but you'll certainly notice it when you first open the clamshell with your cake. I loved the aroma of this cake. There is something about the spices used in making this cake that remind me of being at my Grandpa's house. Ms. Maddie, as everyone called my Grandmother, was on up in years when I was a youngster and didn't do any baking that I recall. But the aroma of this cake just reminded me of being in their house for some reason. Smile.

It contains some nutmeg, cinnamon, and a hint of clove along with some other spices. And raisins, it

has raisins.

This Spanish Bar Cake is the exact same size as the original was – 18 ounces. They've even spread the frosting in between the layers and on top the same way, including the stripes in the icing. How cool is that?

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The cake will serve 6.

I told Chris when I talked with him, that as a Gordon, the cake would serve TWO. Smile. Doesn't it



look good?

My brother and I agreed that spice cake in general may be sort of an acquired taste. But, if you like it, you'll love this moist two layer spice cake with lots of plump raisins in the layers.

Have I mentioned that it's baked right here in the good old USA? Sweet.

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The combination of the spice cake and the icing is amazing. It's not just a bunch of sugar, but a nice balance of the spices in the cake and the sweetness of the icing.



The cakes have about a 10 day shelf life once they arrive. Or, you can freeze it for 6-10 months if desired. I didn't test the 10 day shelf life theory out so I'll take their word for it. The cake was too good and just kept disappearing within a day or two. Don't judge me. Smile.

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The cake was very moist and I liked the thick layer of frosting between the layers.

So, how did it taste? AWESOME.

That's the best way for me to describe it. As I mentioned, it wasn't overly sweet but had a really great combination of spices and icing that went together very well. I'm not a coffee drinker, but I can see where folks that are would like it with a cup of coffee. It also went very well with my glass of cold milk. Gotta love it.



Enjoy!