Relish Mama

BRINGS YOU...

Nan's best Plum Pudding





"Laughter is brightest where food is best." – Irish Proverb

Plum Pudding Pointers

Always soak the dried fruit overnight in stout and brandy before boiling, to allow the stout and brandy (or whiskey) to plump the dried fruit.

Cover the pudding with 2 layers of greased baking paper and 1 layer of foil. Make sure the layers are securely tied onto the pudding to prevent water seeping underneath it and into the basin. Never use only foil for a rich pudding that is to be stored, as fruit acids react with foil.

Make sure the water is two-thirds up the sides of the basin and only top up the boiler with boiling water, as the sudden drop in temperature caused by adding cold water can make it a heavy pudding.

Stand the pudding basin on a metal weight or old upturned saucer to lift it off the base of the boiler. This stops the basin cracking and the pudding "baking" and over-cooking on the bottom.

The longer you steam a pudding, the darker it will become.

Store the pudding in the fridge, as warm, humid places, such as the top of kitchen cupboards, will spoil the pudding & may bring on mould.

Our Nana's Plum Pudding



For the soaked fruit:

375 g raisins, chopped
375 g sultanas
250 g currants
185 g pitted prunes, chopped
185 g candied mixed peel (buy good quality, roughly chopped)
125 ml brandy (to soak the fruit)
125 ml stout (to soak the fruit)

For the Pudding:

4½ cups fresh, soft white breadcrumbs
90 g blanched almonds, roughly chopped
150 g (1 cup) plain flour
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg, preferably freshly grated
2 teaspoons mixed spice
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
220 g (1 cup) soft brown sugar
Finely grated zest of 1 orange
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
1 large carrot, peeled and grated
1 large Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and grated
4 large eggs, lightly beaten
185 ml milk
250 g unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled
Extra butter, for greasing

Our Nana's Plum Pudding

MAKES 2 PUDDINGS

The day before

Place the raisins, sultanas, currants, prunes and mixed peel in a large mixing bowl. Pour over the brandy and stout and stir well to combine. Cover and refrigerate overnight, allowing the fruit to absorb the liquid and become lovely and plump.

Preparing the pudding

Lightly grease two heatproof pudding basins, one with a 2-litre (8-cup) capacity and the other approximately 1.25–1.5 litres. Line the base of each with a small circle of baking paper.

In a separate large mixing bowl, combine the fresh breadcrumbs and chopped almonds.

Sift in the flour, nutmeg and mixed spice. Add the salt, brown sugar and finely grated orange and lemon zest. Stir well to combine.

Add the grated carrot and apple, lightly beaten eggs, milk and melted butter.

Add this mixture to the soaked fruit, including any remaining soaking liquid. Mix thoroughly until everything is evenly combined. I like to use clean hands for this, just as our Nana did.

Divide the mixture between the prepared pudding basins, leaving approximately 2 cm of space at the top to allow for expansion. Have an additional small pudding basin on hand in case you have any extra mixture.

Cover each basin with a double layer of baking paper and a layer of aluminium foil, making a pleat across the centre to allow the pudding to expand as it cooks.

Secure tightly around the rim with kitchen string, creating a sturdy handle to assist with lifting the pudding from the saucepan.

Cooking the pudding

Place a heatproof trivet or an upturned heatproof saucer in the base of a large, deep saucepan.

Carefully lower the pudding basin into the saucepan and pour in boiling water until it reaches approximately two-thirds of the way up the sides of the basin, ensuring the water remains below the covering.

Cover the saucepan with a tight-fitting lid and bring the water back to a gentle simmer.

Steam the larger pudding for approximately 5 hours. Begin checking the smaller pudding after 3½ –4 hours.

Check the water level regularly throughout cooking, replenishing with boiling water as necessary. Do not allow the saucepan to boil dry.

The pudding is ready when it feels firm and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out without any uncooked pudding mixture clinging to it.

Carefully lift the pudding basin from the saucepan and transfer it to a wire rack to cool.

Storing the pudding

Once cooled, remove the cooking papers and foil and replace them with fresh baking paper and foil. Secure tightly.

Refrigerate within 2 hours of removing from the saucepan and consume within 3 days, or freeze for longer storage. Defrost in the fridge.

On Christmas Day:

Steam the larger pudding again for approximately 2 hours, or until piping hot throughout. Allow less time for the smaller pudding, checking that it is thoroughly heated.

Remove the coverings and allow the pudding to rest for 5–10 minutes.

Carefully run a small knife around the edge of the basin before turning it out onto a serving plate.

Serve warm with beautiful homemade custard, brandy butter or softly whipped cream.

Plum Pudding

375g / 2½ cups chopped raisins
375g / 2½ cups sultanas
250g / 1½ cups currants
185g / 1 cup chopped pitted prunes
185g / 1 cup chopped mixed peel
(place all above in large mixing bowl and add
(½ cup each brandy + stout / cover c̄ clean tea
towel and leave overnight to soak + plump fruit)

Lightly Grease 2 pudding bowls (one 8 cup and smaller basin
(both boil proof china

* In a separate bowl
mix 4½ cups soft white breadcrumbs (must be soft to absorb moisture)
with ½ cup or 90g chopped, (Dry crumbs give a sloppy consistency)
blanched almonds

Sift 1 cup plain flour with ½ tspn
ground nutmeg and then 1 tspn mixed spice
Add sugar (1 cup) and finely grated rind
of one lemon + One orange.
Add the mixed, dry ingredients with
1 each large carrot and apple, grated.
Add 4 large eggs (beaten) and ¾ cup milk,
along with 250g melted butter.

Add all the above to the fruit
mixture that was soaked overnight.
Mix thoroughly. (Mixing c̄ hands can make it easier to combine)
Fill lightly greased pudding bowls c̄ mixture, leaving 1cm
at the top. Cover c̄ double thickness of greaseproof
paper + foil. Tie securely c̄ string leaving loop to lift pudding in and out

On Christmas day
boil pudding
again for 2 hours.

lower pudding into large pan
of gently boiling water
Make sure water reaches
2/3 the way up the sides
of the basin.
Rest basin on trivet or
old saucer or small plate to
prevent basin cracking and
pudding burning.
Cover pan c̄ lid and gently
boil pudding 5 hours (8 cup bowl)
As water evaporates
replace c̄ more boiling
water — pudding must
not go off the boil —
important to add
boiling water. Remove +
cool pudding on wire
rack. When cold
replace greaseproof
kitchen paper + foil layers and
string store
in fridge



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