

Nonna G's Christmas Yum Yum Pudding

Nonna G's parents had family in America and visited often in the 1940's and '50's. The recipe miraculously came back on one of their trips and has featured on our Christmas table every year since.

The great thing about this pudding is it can be made months, weeks or days before. You just have to steam it long enough and that fast tracks the maturing.

Before you start make sure you have the right sized pudding bowls, greaseproof paper and string to cover them with. This recipe is enough to make two 600ml puddings, or one 1.2 litre pudding. You can use plastic pudding bowls for convenience but make sure you have a pot with a tight-fitting lid that will hold the bowl comfortably with water a third of the way up. Best test now, before the pudding is made and the water is boiling.

Serves 6 - 8

Ingredients

400ml cold water

250g golden caster sugar

125g unsalted butter

3 tablespoons Treacle

2 tbsp ground cinnamon

2 tsp ground cloves

½ tsp of ground mixed spice

750g dried seedless muscatel raisins, soaked overnight in brandy or marsala

150ml brandy, marsala wine or Glengoyne 10 YO to soak the raisins and to treat the cake once baked

450g plain flour

3 tsp bicarbonate of soda

A pinch of fine sea salt

Granulated sugar

A very generous glug of brandy to set a light

Method

Before you start with the cake, soak the seedless muscatel raisins overnight in the brandy or marsala.

Place the water, sugar, butter, treacle, spices and fruit into a large pot and stir. Very slowly bring it to the boil. Switch the heat off and allow the mixture to cool. It is vital the mixture is cool, but not cold, before you add the sieved flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt into the mixture. Stir well - this needs a bit of elbow grease.

Generously butter a large 1 kilo pudding pudding bowl or plastic basin with lid. Nonna G always places a circle of baking parchment at the bottom of the bowl to stop it sticking when you turn the pudding out.

Next fill the bowl and cover with another circle of baking parchment and then either use the plastic matching lid or wrap a double layer of foil and parchment around the pudding top and tie tightly with string.

Choose a large pot that the pudding will fit in and allow enough space to half-fill with water. Place a saucer at the bottom of the pot - this is an insurance policy if you forget to top up the water half way through the steaming. Steam for about three to four hours. Yes it takes a long time.

To reheat, steam for four hours if your Nonna G. The kitchen will be steamed too so if you plan on stripping the wallpaper it's usually a perfect time to do this too.

Serve with chilled double cream or custard. I use custard powder (yes I cheat, but it's a busy day) but make it with mainly single cream and just a little milk for an easy but totally indulgent finish to a delicious pudding and a beautiful day.