

STICKY DATE CHRISTMAS PUDDING

A yummy Christmas dessert that everyone will love!

CHALLENGING | 20 MINS | 3 HOURS | 12 SERVES

Ingredients

- 450g pitted dates
- 375g mixed fruit
- ¾ cup caster sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- Pinch of sea salt
- 130g butter, plus extra to grease tin
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 large eggs
- 1 ½ cup self raising flour
- 1 ½ cup plain flour
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tbsp rum

For Caramel Sauce

- 1 cup caster sugar
- 6 tbsp salted butter
- 1/2 cup heavy cream

For Toffee Shards

- 60g hazelnuts
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tbsp sesame Seeds

Instructions

1. Combine dates, mixed fruit, 280ml water, sugars, salt and butter in large saucepan. Bring to the boil then reduce heat and allow to simmer for 8 mins.
2. Add bicarbonate of soda, stir well and allow to cool completely (preferably overnight).
3. Once completely cool, add eggs, flours, spices and rum. Mix well.
4. Generously grease inside the pudding bowl. Pour the mixture into tin then cover with a layer of baking paper and a layer of foil and secure tightly with kitchen string.
5. Place a small cooling rack or an upturned oven-safe dish into the base of a large saucepan. Place pudding bowl on top so that it is not directly touching the bottom of the pan. Fill saucepan with boiling water to come half way up the sides of the pudding bowl. Bring water to the boil then reduce heat to low, cover and allow to simmer for 3 hours. Remove pudding from water, allow to cool completely before removing pudding from tin.
6. To make the sauce, combine cream, butter and sugar in a saucepan. Stir over a low heat until all ingredients combined. Stir in a pinch of salt.
7. To make the toffee shards, line a baking tray with baking paper. Spread hazelnuts evenly across the tray.
8. Add sugar and water to a medium, heavy-based saucepan over high heat. Melt sugar, stirring constantly, until all granules have dissolved completely and the toffee is a light golden colour.
9. Remove from heat immediately and pour over the hazelnuts to coat. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and sea salt flakes and allow to harden before breaking into large shards. Serve on top of pudding.