

Wartime eggless Christmas pudding



During the Second World War, it was important for people to stay as positive as possible. Christmas provided families and friends with an opportunity to come together, and toast loved ones serving in the armed forces.

However, food was in short supply. From January in 1940, food rationing was introduced, and people were allowed just one fresh egg per week. But England's home cooks weren't about to let that stop them! This eggless pudding recipe is adapted from a real 1940s recipe, and still tastes delicious – Merry Christmas!

Tip: in the 1940s people measured ingredients using ounces (oz), pounds (lb) and pints. We've provided grams for you below, but you could also try using the old measurements for a more authentic bake!

Ingredients

- 2oz/57g plain flour
- 4oz/113g breadcrumbs
- 4oz/113g melted fat or suet
- 1oz/28g marmalade
- 1lb/454g mixed dried fruit
- 3oz/85g sugar
- 1/4 pint/140ml milk (traditionally, brandy, rum, ale, or stout is used)
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon mixed spices

You will also need a 2-pint (16cm) pudding basin

Method

- Sift together the flour, baking powder and spices.
- Add the sugar, dried fruit and breadcrumbs, and mix it all up.
- Drizzle over the melted fat or suet and mix it together.
- Add the marmalade and milk and mix thoroughly.
- Pour your mix into a greased pudding basin.
- Cover the pudding with greased paper and foil, folded to make a pleat so that it can expand as the pudding cooks. Tie string or use a rubber band around the rim to prevent water from entering the pudding.
- Place the pudding into a large pan and pour in water until it is half-way up the pudding basin. Put the pudding onto a steamer, or a small upside-down plate to keep it off the bottom of the pan and above the water level.
- Put a lid on the pan and bring the water to a boil, then lower the heat to simmer it.
- Steam the pudding like this for 4 hours, checking the water level occasionally to make sure it stays halfway up the pudding. Top it up if needed.
- Carefully remove the pudding from the pan and leave to cool.
- Once the pudding is completely cool, remove the foil and wrap it tightly with clingfilm or use an airtight reusable lid, and store it the fridge (it'll keep for up to a month).
- Before serving, remove any clingfilm and put on a fresh lid of greased paper and foil.
- Steam your pudding again for an hour. Or, without the foil, microwave it for 2-3 minutes.