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by Liz Robb

Sticky Toffee Pudding

Ingredients

For the date sponge:
175g dates
150ml tea, made with boiling water
1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
2 medium eggs
70g soft light brown sugar
70g butter, plus extra for greasing
1 tablespoon of dark muscovado sugar
1 tablespoon of golden syrup
150g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
1 level teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
85ml semi skimmed milk
For the sticky toffee sauce:
70g butter
130g soft light brown sugar
20g dark muscovado sugar
200ml double cream

Preparation

1. Stone and chop the dates. Place in a small bowl and leave to soak in the tea, made with boiling water, allow to cool then keep in the fridge for an hour or more
2. When you are ready to cook, add the vanilla extract and blitz together briefly a few times in a food processor or blender.
3. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees, 160 degrees fan oven.
4. Prepare 5 individual metal pudding tins by greasing lightly then dusting with flour.
5. Cut the softened butter into small pieces then add to the soft brown sugar and mix together. Beat the eggs in a small bowl then add the egg a little at a time, beating well together. Add the muscovado sugar and the golden syrup and mix well.
6. Sift the flour into another bowl with the bicarbonate of soda. Add 2 tablespoons of the flour to the pudding mix with about a third of the milk and fold in gently. Repeat until everything is incorporated.
7. Now add the blended dates and tea and fold gently into the mix. Spoon the mixture into the 5 prepared tins, place on a baking sheet and bake in the preheated oven for about 20 minutes.
8. Leave the tins to cool for a few minutes after leaving the oven, then gently separate the edges from the sides of the tins and turn out the puddings.
9. When the puddings come out of the oven, make the sauce. Melt the butter, cut into pieces, in a small saucepan then stir in both types of sugar. Heat gently to dissolve the sugar, mix together then pour in 150ml of the cream. Bring to a simmer over a low heat and cook for 3-4 minutes, stirring constantly, then stir in the rest of the cream. Leave to stand for just a minute to thicken a little before serving.
10. Spoon a little of the sauce into the bottom of each bowl. Place the warm pudding in the centre of the pool of sauce then spoon the rest of the sauce on the top, allowing it to trickle down the sides.

Cooks Note

Enjoy a lovely light date sponge smothered in sweet sticky toffee sauce by making this classic dessert. Serve with cream, custard or a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Makes 5 individual puddings.