

# Traditional Christmas Pudding



## Ingredients

200g pitted dates, roughly chopped:

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

300ml boiling water

50g butter, plus extra for greasing

75g light soft brown sugar

75g dark muscovado sugar

2 free-range eggs

175g self-raising flour

## For the sauce

125g butter:

75g light soft brown sugar

50g dark muscovado sugar

200ml double or whipping cream

Pinch of salt

## Method

Preheat the oven to 180C. Butter an ovenproof dish – either a large traditional oval one or a brownie tin of around 20x30cm

Put the dates and bicarbonate of soda into a bowl and cover with the boiling water. Leave to stand.

Cream together the butter and sugars in a bowl until very soft and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, adding a heaped tablespoon of flour with each addition, then add the rest of the flour.

Add all the dates and their soaking water and stir briefly to combine. Pour into the prepared dish. Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes, or until springy to the touch and slightly shrinking away from the sides.

While the pudding is baking, make the sauce. Put all the ingredients into a saucepan, stirring until the butter has melted and the sugars have dissolved. Turn up the heat and bring to the boil, then simmer for a few minutes, until the sauce has thickened to the consistency of a light custard (that is it should coat the back of a spoon).

While the pudding is still hot, poke holes over the surface and pour over half the sauce. Set the rest of the sauce aside. Leave to stand for a while – the pudding can be left for a couple of days and will just get stickier. Serve warmed through again with the rest of the sauce, also warmed through.