



BAKED DESSERTS

Baked desserts are the stuff of childhood dreams... reminiscences of chilly afternoons and the hot rush of spicy-sweet air when the oven door is opened. The majority of the recipes in this chapter are real old-fashioned favourites—crumbles and cobblers, betties and puddings. Comfort food to warm and nurture; often an irresistible combination of autumn fruits and buttery doughs. But that's not to say this is strictly a cold-weather chapter... the truly dedicated can enjoy their baked desserts all year round.

COBBLERS, CRUMBLES
AND CRISPS

These are simple fruit desserts, with a topping, that are served straight from the oven. The fruit base should be juicy, not overthickened, so it soaks into the topping.

Cobblers are topped with a scone-type dough, in shapes like cobbles.

Crisps and crumbles are topped with a rubbed in mixture of flour, butter and sugar. Additions such as nuts and oats vary the flavour and texture. They can also be topped with biscuit crumbs, muesli and breadcrumbs.

A pandowdy is made with sliced fruit, topped with a pastry crust, which is broken into squares and pushed back into the fruit for the end of the cooking time. Dowdying means breaking up the dough.

Slumps and grunts are like cobblers, but are often cooked on top of the stove rather than baked. The fruit supposedly 'grunts' as it cooks.



APPLE COBBLER

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Total cooking time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Serves 6



- 1 kg (2 lb) cooking apples,
peeled and cored
- 1/4 cup (60 g/2 oz) caster sugar
- 25 g (3/4 oz) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon grated orange rind
- 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice

Topping

- 2/3 cup (85 g/3 oz) self-raising flour
- 1/3 cup (40 g/1 1/4 oz) plain flour
- 50 g (1 3/4 oz) unsalted butter, chopped
- 2 tablespoons caster sugar
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2-3 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon raw sugar

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Cut the apples into 8-12 wedges and combine them with the caster sugar, butter and orange rind and juice in a large bowl. Mix well until all the apple pieces are thoroughly coated. Transfer to a 1.5 litre ovenproof dish about 5 cm (2 inches) deep, cover with foil and bake for 40 minutes, or until the apples are tender, stirring once during cooking.

2 When the apples have been cooking for about 30 minutes, start to prepare the topping. Sift the flours into a bowl and rub the butter into the mixture until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar and make a well in the centre of the mixture. Using a flat-bladed knife, stir in the egg and enough milk to make a mixture of thick dropping consistency.

3 Remove the foil and drop spoonfuls of the mixture onto the surface of the cooked apples, covering the surface. Sprinkle with the raw sugar and return to the oven. Bake for 35 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the topping comes out clean. Serve hot. Cobbler can be served with cream or custard.



ABOVE: Apple cobbler

SLUMP

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Total cooking time: 30 minutes
Serves 6



500 g (1 lb) fresh or canned cherries,
pitted
caster sugar, to taste
1½ cups (185 g/6 oz) self-raising flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
50 g (1¾ oz) unsalted butter, chilled
and cubed
¼ cup (55 g/2 oz) demerara sugar
150 ml (5 fl oz) cream

1 Cook the cherries in ½ cup (60 ml/2 fl oz) water in a large pan over moderate heat for 5 minutes, or until they have begun to soften. Add the sugar and transfer to a 1 litre ovenproof dish to cool. Preheat the oven to moderately hot 200°C (400°F/Gas 6).

2 Sift the flour, baking powder and a little salt into a large bowl, add the butter and demerara sugar and rub in, using just your fingertips, to form fine crumbs. Pour in the cream and stir well to mix everything together—you should have a spreadable mixture.

3 Cover the cooled cherries with blobs of the scone topping, leaving small gaps between the blobs. Bake for 25 minutes, or until the topping is puffed and golden. Slump can be served with cream or lightly whipped cream.

PLUM COBBLER

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Total cooking time: 45 minutes
Serves 6–8



750 g (1½ lb) blood plums, or other plums
¼ cup (60 g/2 oz) caster sugar

Topping

1 cup (125 g/4 oz) self-raising flour
½ cup (60 g/2 oz) plain flour
¼ cup (60 g/2 oz) caster sugar
125 g (4 oz) unsalted butter, chopped
1 egg
½ cup (125 ml/4 fl oz) milk
icing sugar, to dust

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Lightly grease a 2 litre ovenproof dish. Cut the blood plums into quarters, discarding the stones.

2 Put the plums in a pan with the sugar and 1 tablespoon water. Stir over low heat for 5 minutes, or until the sugar dissolves and the fruit softens slightly. Spread the plum mixture in the prepared dish.

3 Sift the flours into a bowl, add the sugar and stir. Rub in the butter, using just your fingertips, until the mixture is fine and crumbly. Combine the egg and milk and whisk until smooth. Stir into the flour mixture.

4 Place large spoonfuls of mixture on top of the plums. Bake for 30–40 minutes, or until the top is golden and cooked through. Dust with icing sugar before serving.



BELOW: Plum cobbler





SELF-SAUCING CHOCOLATE PUDDING

Preparation time: 25 minutes
Total cooking time: 40 minutes
Serves 4–6



1 cup (125 g/4 oz) self-raising flour
1/4 cup (40 g/1 1/4 oz) cocoa powder
1 1/4 cups (310 g/10 oz) caster sugar
1/2 cup (125 ml/4 fl oz) milk
1 egg
60 g (2 oz) unsalted butter, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
icing sugar, to dust

Orange cream

1 1/4 cups (315 ml/10 fl oz) cream
1 teaspoon grated orange rind
1 tablespoon icing sugar
1 tablespoon Grand Marnier

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4) and grease a 2 litre ovenproof dish. Sift

the flour and 2 tablespoons of the cocoa into a large bowl. Stir in 1/2 cup (125 g/4 oz) of the sugar and make a well in the centre.

2 Pour in the combined milk, egg, butter and vanilla. Stir until smooth, but do not overbeat. Pour into the dish and dissolve the remaining cocoa and sugar in 2 1/2 cups (600 ml/20 fl oz) boiling water. Pour gently over the back of a spoon over the pudding mixture.

3 Bake the pudding for 40 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean when inserted into the centre.

4 To make the orange cream, beat the cream, orange rind, icing sugar and Grand Marnier with electric beaters until soft peaks form.

5 Dust the pudding with sifted icing sugar and serve immediately with the orange cream.

EVE'S PUDDING

Preparation time: 25 minutes
Total cooking time: 55 minutes
Serves 4–6



500 g (1 lb) cooking apples
2 tablespoons sugar
125 g (4 oz) unsalted butter
1/2 cup (125 g/4 oz) caster sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
1/2 cup (125 ml/4 fl oz) milk
1 1/2 cups (185 g/6 oz) self-raising flour

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4). Grease a deep, 1.5 litre ovenproof dish with oil or melted butter. Line the base with baking paper.

2 Peel, core and thickly slice the apples. Place the apple slices, sugar and 1 tablespoon water into a pan. Cover and cook over medium heat for 12 minutes, or until the apples are soft but still hold together. Using a slotted spoon, spoon the apples into the base of the prepared dish. Allow to cool.

3 Using electric beaters, beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Using a large metal spoon, fold in the combined essence and milk alternately with the sifted flour.

4 Spoon the mixture over the apples and smooth the surface. Bake for 40–45 minutes, or until the pudding is cooked when tested with a skewer.



ABOVE: Self-saucing chocolate pudding



LEMON DELICIOUS

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Total cooking time: 40 minutes
Serves 4



60 g (2 oz) unsalted butter
¼ cup (185 g/6 oz) caster sugar
3 eggs, separated
1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
⅓ cup (40 g/1 ¼ oz) self-raising flour,
sifted
¼ cup (60 ml/2 fl oz) lemon juice
¾ cup (185 ml/6 fl oz) milk
icing sugar, to dust

- 1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4). Brush a 1-litre ovenproof dish with oil. Using electric beaters, beat the butter, sugar, egg yolks and rind in a small bowl until the mixture is light and creamy. Transfer to a medium bowl.
- 2 Add the flour and stir with a wooden spoon until just combined. Add the juice and milk and stir to combine.
- 3 Place the egg whites in a small, dry bowl. Using electric beaters, beat until firm peaks form. Fold in the pudding mixture with a metal spoon until just combined.
- 4 Spoon into the ovenproof dish and place the dish in a deep baking dish. Pour in boiling water to come one-third of the way up the side of the pudding dish. Bake for 40 minutes. Dust with icing sugar. Spoon some sauce on each serving.



LEMON TIPS

When buying lemons, select fruit that are heavy for their size and feel firm. Thinner-skinned lemons such as Lisbon and Meyer are juicier than thick-skinned ones such as Eureka. Lisbon and Eureka have more acidity and are tarter than Meyer lemons.

The juice of one lemon is usually about three tablespoons. Lemons at room temperature, or those warmed in the microwave for a few seconds, juice more easily than cold ones.

To grate rind easily, cover the fine side of a grater with a piece of baking paper and grate through the paper. Pull the paper off the grater and scrape off the rind.

The essential oils contained in lemon rind (zest) give a perfume rather than flavour. The flavour comes mainly from the juice.

Discard any lemons which have soft patches or look as if they are about to go mouldy. Lemons will go mouldy more quickly if stored with other fruit, so store separately.

ABOVE: Lemon delicious

APPLE BETTY

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Total cooking time: 50 minutes
Serves 4–6



5 cooking apples, peeled, cored and chopped
100 g (3½ oz) unsalted butter
½ cup (95 g/3 oz) soft brown sugar,
plus 1 tablespoon
grated rind of 1 lemon
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
pinch of ground nutmeg
3 cups (240 g/7½ oz) fresh breadcrumbs

- 1 Cook the apples with 1 tablespoon of the butter, 1 tablespoon brown sugar and the rind, cinnamon and nutmeg, for 10–15 minutes, until the apples are soft enough to heat to a purée.
- 2 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Melt the remaining butter in a frying pan over low heat and add the breadcrumbs and the remaining brown sugar. Toss everything together until all the crumbs are coated, and continue tossing while you fry the crumbs until golden brown.
- 3 Spread one-third of the crumbs in a 1 litre ovenproof dish and add half the apple purée in an even layer. Repeat with another one-third of the crumbs and the remaining apple, then finish with a layer of crumbs. Bake for 30 minutes, or until crisp and golden brown on top.

APPLE CRUMBLE

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Total cooking time: 45 minutes
Serves 4–6



8 cooking apples (about 1.4 kg)
2 tablespoons caster sugar
1 cup (125 g/4 oz) plain flour
½ cup (95 g/3 oz) soft brown sugar
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
100 g (3½ oz) butter, chopped

- 1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Peel and core the apples and cut each one into 8 wedges. Place in a saucepan with ¼ cup (60 ml/2 fl oz) water, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to low and cover. Cook for about 15 minutes, or until the apples are just

soft. Remove from the heat, drain and then stir in the sugar. Spoon the apple into a 1.5 litre ovenproof dish.

- 2 Place the flour in a bowl and stir in the brown sugar and cinnamon. Add the butter and rub with just your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Sprinkle evenly over the top of the apple mixture to cover completely. Bake for 25–30 minutes, or until crisp and golden brown. Serve immediately with cream or ice cream.

RHUBARB CRUMBLE

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Total cooking time: 25 minutes
Serves 4–6



1 kg (2 lb) rhubarb
2½ cup (160 g/5½ oz) sugar
100 g (3½ oz) unsalted butter
¾ cup (90 g/3 oz) plain flour
½ cup (75 g/2½ oz) demerara sugar
10 Amaretti biscuits, crushed

Crunchy maple cream

200 ml (6½ fl oz) thick (double) cream
2 tablespoons golden syrup or pure maple syrup
3 Amaretti biscuits, crushed

- 1 Preheat the oven to moderately hot 200°C (400°F/Gas 6). Trim the rhubarb, cut into short lengths and put in a pan with the sugar. Stir over low heat until the sugar has dissolved, then cover and simmer for 8–10 minutes, or until the rhubarb is soft but still chunky. Spoon into a deep 1.5 litre ovenproof dish.
 - 2 Rub the butter into the flour until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs, then stir in the demerara sugar and biscuits.
 - 3 Sprinkle the crumble over the stewed rhubarb and bake for 15 minutes, or until the topping is golden brown. Serve with the crunchy maple cream.
 - 4 To make the crunchy maple cream, place the cream in a bowl, carefully swirl the golden syrup through, then the crushed biscuits. Do not overmix—there should be rich veins of the crunchy syrup through the cream.
- NOTE:** Taste the rhubarb, as you may need to add a little more sugar.



OPPOSITE PAGE: Rhubarb crumble (top); Apple betty





CUSTARD PUDDING WITH STEWED APPLE

Preparation time: 25 minutes
Total cooking time: 1 hour 5 minutes
Serves 6



Custard

1½ tablespoons custard powder
½ cup (125 ml/4 fl oz) milk
1 tablespoon sugar
⅓ cup (90 g/3 oz) sour cream

180 g (5¼ oz) unsalted butter
½ cup (125 g/4 oz) caster sugar
2 eggs
1¼ cups (155 g/5 oz) self-raising flour
¼ cup (30 g/1 oz) custard powder
¼ cup (45 g/1½ oz) ground almonds
1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) cream
4 cooking apples
2 tablespoons sugar
icing sugar, to dust

BELOW: Custard pudding
with stewed apple



1 To make the custard, combine the custard powder and a little of the milk in a bowl and mix until smooth. Add the remaining milk and mix together. Pour into a pan, add the sugar and sour cream and stir over medium heat until the custard thickens and boils. Remove from the heat and cover the surface with plastic wrap to prevent a skin forming.

2 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4). Beat the butter and sugar together until light and creamy. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Fold in the sifted flour, custard powder and ground almonds alternately with the cream.

3 Place half the pudding mixture in a 2 litre ovenproof dish and spoon the custard over it. Top with the remaining pudding mixture. The mixture will be a little stiff, pile it on top of the custard and smooth it out gently with the back of a spoon. Bake for 45–50 minutes, or until the pudding is firm to the touch. Dust with icing sugar.

4 Meanwhile, peel, core and thinly slice the apples and place in a pan with the sugar and 2 tablespoons water. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes, until the apples are tender. Serve the pudding from the dish, accompanied by the warm apples.

RICE PUDDING

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Total cooking time: 3 hours
Serves 4



¼ cup (55 g/2 oz) short-grain rice
1½ cups (410 ml/13 fl oz) milk
1½ tablespoons caster sugar
¾ cup (185 ml/6 fl oz) cream
¼ teaspoon vanilla essence
¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1 bay leaf

1 Preheat the oven to slow 150°C (300°F/ Gas 2). Butter a 1 litre ovenproof dish. Mix together the rice, milk, caster sugar, cream and vanilla essence and pour into the dish. Dust the surface with the nutmeg and float the bay leaf on top.

2 Bake the rice pudding for 3 hours, by which time the rice should have absorbed most of the milk and be creamy in texture with a brown skin on top.



RICE PUDDING WITH LEMON THYME AND STRAWBERRIES

Preparation time: 20 minutes + standing

Total cooking time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Serves 6-8

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500 g (1 lb) strawberries

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

1/3 cup (90 g/3 oz) caster sugar

1/4 cup (150 g/5 oz) long-grain rice

3 cups (750 ml/24 fl oz) milk

6 x 3 cm (1 1/4 inch) sprigs lemon thyme

1/3 cup (90 g/3 oz) sugar

3 egg yolks

1 egg

1 Trim the stalks from the strawberries and cut the strawberries in half. Put in a bowl with the vinegar. Sprinkle the caster sugar over the top and stir to combine. Leave to absorb the flavours, turning occasionally.

2 Preheat the oven to warm 160°C (315°F/ Gas 2-3). Brush a 1.5 litre ovenproof dish with oil or melted butter.

3 Rinse the rice well and put in a medium pan with 1 1/2 cups (375 ml/12 fl oz) water. Bring to the boil, cover and cook over low heat for 8-10 minutes. Remove from the heat and leave the pan with the lid on for 5 minutes, until the liquid is absorbed and the rice is soft.

4 Heat the milk with the lemon thyme and sugar in a small pan. When bubbles form at the edge, remove from the heat and set aside for 10 minutes so that it absorbs flavour from the lemon thyme. Strain. Beat the egg yolks and egg in a large bowl, add the rice and gradually stir in the warm milk. Pour into the prepared dish. Place the dish in a baking dish and carefully pour in enough warm water to come halfway up the side of the pudding dish. Bake for 50-60 minutes, or until the pudding is just set (timing may vary according to the dish used). Remove from the oven and allow to stand for 10 minutes. Serve warm or cold with the strawberries.



ABOVE: Rice pudding with lemon thyme and strawberries



ABOVE: Bread and butter pudding

BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING

Preparation time: 20 minutes + soaking + chilling

Total cooking time: 40 minutes

Serves 4



60 g (2 oz) mixed raisins and sultanas

2 tablespoons brandy or rum

30 g (1 oz) unsalted butter

4 slices good-quality white bread or brioche loaf

3 eggs

3 tablespoons caster sugar

3 cups (750 ml/24 fl oz) milk

1/4 cup (60 ml/2 fl oz) cream

1/4 teaspoon vanilla essence

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 tablespoon demerara sugar

1 Soak the raisins and sultanas in the brandy or rum for about 30 minutes. Butter the slices of bread or brioche and cut each piece into 8 triangles. Arrange the bread in a 1-litre ovenproof dish.

2 Mix the eggs with the sugar, add the milk, cream, vanilla and cinnamon and mix well. Drain the raisins and sultanas and add any liquid to the custard.

3 Scatter the soaked raisins and sultanas over the bread and pour the custard over the top. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

4 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Remove the pudding from the refrigerator and sprinkle with the demerara sugar. Bake for 35–40 minutes, or until the custard is set and the top crunchy and golden.

NOTE: It is very important that you use good-quality bread for this recipe. Ordinary sliced white bread will tend to go a bit claggy when it soaks up the milk.

CARAMEL BREAD PUDDING

Preparation time: 40 minutes + standing + chilling

Total cooking time: 1 hour

Serves 6-8

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$\frac{2}{3}$ cup (160 g/5½ oz) caster sugar

500 g (1 lb) panettone or brioche

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 g/4 oz) caster sugar, extra

2 cups (500 ml/16 fl oz) milk

2 wide strips lemon rind, white pith removed

3 eggs, lightly beaten

fresh fruit and cream, optional, for serving

1 Preheat the oven to moderate (180°C/350°F/Gas 4). Lightly brush a 23 x 13 x 7 cm (9 x 5 x 2¾ inch), 1.25 litre loaf tin with oil or melted butter.

2 Place the caster sugar with 2 tablespoons water in a small pan over medium heat and stir, without boiling, until the sugar has completely dissolved. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat slightly and simmer, without stirring, for about 10 minutes, until the syrup becomes a rich golden colour. Watch carefully towards the end of cooking to prevent burning. As soon as it reaches the colour you desire, pour into the loaf tin and leave to cool.

3 Using a large serrated knife, cut the panettone or brioche into 2 cm (¾ inch) thick slices and remove the crusts. Trim into large pieces to fit the tin in three layers, filling any gaps with panettone cut to size.

4 Stir the extra-caster sugar, milk and lemon rind in a pan over low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Bring just to the boil, remove from the heat and transfer to a jug to allow the lemon flavour to be absorbed and the mixture to cool. Remove the lemon rind and whisk in the beaten eggs. Pour the mixture gradually into the tin, allowing it to soak into the panettone after each addition. Set aside for 20 minutes to let the panettone soak up the liquid.

5 Place the loaf tin into a large baking dish and pour in enough hot water to come halfway up the sides of the tin. Bake the pudding for 50 minutes, until just set. Carefully remove the tin from the baking dish and set aside to cool. Refrigerate the pudding overnight.

6 When ready to serve, turn out onto a plate and cut into slices. Serve with fresh fruit and cream, if desired.



BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING

Bread and butter pudding can be made with all sorts of bread or cake leftovers. Croissants, Danish pastries, panettone, brioche and any kind of fruit loaf and buns make luscious bread and butter puddings. A sprinkling of demerara sugar or crushed sugar cubes will give a lovely crunchy topping. For a shiny top, glaze the hot pudding with apricot jam.

ABOVE: Caramel bread pudding



COINTREAU BREAD PUDDINGS WITH ORANGE CREAM

Preparation time: 40 minutes + soaking
Total cooking time: 30 minutes
Serves 4



60 g (2 oz) muscatels or sultanas
1/3 cup (80 ml/2 1/4 fl oz) Cointreau
5 eggs
1/3 cup (115 g/4 oz) honey
1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) milk
1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) cream
1 loaf crusty white bread

Orange cream

1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) cream
2 teaspoons icing sugar
2 teaspoons Cointreau
grated rind of 1 orange
sprinkle of ground nutmeg

1 Soak the muscatels or sultanas in Cointreau for 2 hours, or overnight. Drain, reserving the liquid. Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Beat together the eggs, honey, milk, cream and reserved Cointreau. Grease four 250 ml (8 fl oz) ramekins and divide half the muscatels among the ramekins.

2 Slice the bread thickly. Remove the crusts. Put a slice in each ramekin, trimming to fit. Sprinkle the remaining muscatels over the bread, then top with another slice of bread. Pour the egg mixture over the top, giving it time to soak in. Put the ramekins in a baking dish and pour water into the dish to come halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake for 25–30 minutes, or until set. Leave for 5 minutes before turning out.

3 To make the orange cream, whip together the cream and icing sugar until peaks form. Fold in the Cointreau, rind and nutmeg. Serve with the puddings.

CABINET PUDDING

Preparation time: 25 minutes + soaking
Total cooking time: 50 minutes
Serves 6



4 tablespoons sugar
100 g (3 1/2 oz) mixed dried fruit
2 tablespoons rum or boiling water
150 g (5 oz) sponge cake
2 cups (500 ml/16 fl oz) milk
4 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
cream, for serving

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Grease six 185 ml (6 fl oz) dairy mounds. Sprinkle the base and side with 1 tablespoon sugar. Soak the fruit in the rum for 15–20 minutes.

2 Cut the sponge into 5 mm (1/4 inch) cubes and combine with the fruit and rum mixture. Spoon evenly into the moulds. Warm the milk in a small pan, until bubbles appear around the edge. Whisk the eggs and remaining sugar together until well combined. Whisk in the warm milk and vanilla essence. Pour evenly into the moulds over the sponge mixture.

3 Place the moulds in a large baking dish, half filled with boiling water. Bake for 40–45 minutes, or until the custard is set. Remove from the water and leave for 2–3 minutes before turning out onto a warm plate. Serve with cream.



ABOVE: Cointreau bread puddings with orange cream



CHERRY CLAFOUTIS

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Total cooking time: 35 minutes

Serves 6–8



500 g (1 lb) fresh cherries, or 800 g

(1 lb 10 oz) can pitted cherries,
well drained

½ cup (60 g/2 oz) plain flour

⅓ cup (90 g/3 oz) sugar

4 eggs, lightly beaten

1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) milk

25 g (¾ oz) unsalted butter, melted

icing sugar, to dust

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4). Brush a 23 cm (9 inch) glass or ceramic shallow pie plate with melted butter.

2 Pit the cherries and spread onto the pie plate in a single layer. If using canned cherries, drain

them thoroughly in a sieve before spreading in the plate. If they are still wet, they will leak into the batter.

3 Sift the flour into a bowl, add the sugar and make a well in the centre. Gradually add the combined eggs, milk and butter, whisking until smooth and free of lumps.

4 Pour the batter over the cherries and bake for 30–35 minutes. The batter should be risen and golden. Remove from the oven and dust generously with icing sugar. Serve immediately.

NOTE: A clafoutis (pronounced 'clafootee') is a classic French batter pudding, a speciality of the Limousin region. Clafoutis comes from *Clafir*, a dialect verb meaning 'to fill'. It is traditionally made with cherries. Other berries such as blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, or small well-flavoured strawberries may be used. Use a shallow pie plate or the top will not turn golden brown.

ABOVE: Cherry clafoutis



BROWNIE SANDWICH



When the brownie is cooked, cool completely in the tin, lift out using the paper, then cut into squares.



Sandwich each square of ice cream between two squares of brownie, then dust with cocoa.

ABOVE: Cappuccino brownies

CAPPUCCINO BROWNIES

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Total cooking time: 40 minutes
Serves 6



150 g (5 oz) unsalted butter
125 g (4 oz) good-quality dark chocolate
3 eggs
1½ cups (375 g/12 oz) caster sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
1 cup (125 g/4 oz) plain flour
¼ cup (30 g/1 oz) cocoa powder
2 tablespoons instant coffee powder
1 litre vanilla ice cream
1 teaspoon drinking chocolate

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Grease a 28 x 18 cm (11 x 7 inch) shallow baking tin and line the base with baking paper, extending over two sides.
2 Place the butter and chocolate in a small heatproof bowl. Stand the bowl over a pan of steaming water, off the heat, and stir until melted and smooth. Remove from the pan and allow to cool slightly.

3 In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, sugar and vanilla together. Whisk in the chocolate mixture, then stir in the sifted flour, cocoa and coffee powder. Do not overbeat. Pour into the tin and bake for 40 minutes. Cool in the tin until warm.
4 Lift the brownie from the tin, using the baking paper. Using an 8 cm (3 inch) round biscuit cutter, cut out 6 rounds while the brownie is still warm. Place each round on a serving plate, top with 3 small scoops of ice cream and dust lightly with drinking chocolate. Serve immediately.

ICE CREAM BROWNIE SANDWICH

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Total cooking time: 40 minutes
Serves 6



1 litre vanilla ice cream, slightly softened
125 g (4 oz) unsalted butter, chopped
185 g (6 oz) good-quality dark chocolate, chopped
1 cup (250 g/8 oz) caster sugar
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup (125 g/4 oz) plain flour, sifted
½ cup (60 g/2 oz) chopped walnuts
cocoa, for dusting

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Line a baking tray with baking paper and spread out the ice cream to form a 15 x 20 cm (6 x 8 inch) rectangle, cover the surface with baking paper and re-freeze it. Lightly grease a 20 x 30 cm (8 x 12 inch) tin and line the base with baking paper, leaving a little hanging over the two longer sides.

2 Put the butter and chocolate in a heatproof bowl, bring a large pan filled with 5 cm (2 inches) water to the boil, then remove from the heat. Stand the bowl over the pan, making sure the bowl does not touch the water, and stir the chocolate until melted. Remove the bowl and cool slightly. Whisk in the sugar and eggs, then sift on the flour and add the walnuts. Stir until just combined, then spoon into the tin, smoothing the surface. Bake for 30 minutes, or until firm. Cool completely in the tin, then lift out, using the baking paper.

3 Cut the brownie into 12 portions and the ice cream into six. Sandwich the ice cream between two pieces of brownie and dust with cocoa.

HAZELNUT PUDDINGS

Preparation time: 40 minutes
Total cooking time: 30 minutes
Serves 8

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30 g (1 oz) unsalted butter, melted
60 g (2 oz) ground hazelnuts
125 g (4 oz) unsalted butter
½ cup (125 g/4 oz) caster sugar
3 eggs, lightly beaten
2 cups (250 g/8 oz) self-raising flour,
sifted
60 g (2 oz) sultanas
½ cup (80 ml/2¼ fl oz) brandy
½ cup (80 ml/2¼ fl oz) buttermilk

Chocolate cream sauce

1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) cream
30 g (1 oz) unsalted butter
200 g (6½ oz) good-quality dark
chocolate, chopped

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4). Brush eight 125 ml (4 fl oz) ovenproof pudding moulds or ramekins with the melted butter and coat with the ground hazelnuts, shaking off the excess. Beat together the butter and sugar with electric beaters, until light and creamy. Add the eggs gradually, beating well after each addition. Fold in the flour, sultanas, brandy and buttermilk. Divide among the ramekins, cover each with a piece of greased foil with a pleat in it, and secure with string.
2 Place the puddings in a large baking dish and pour in enough water to come three-quarters of the way up the sides of the ramekins. Bake for 25 minutes, topping up with more water if necessary. A skewer inserted into the centre of the pudding will come out clean when cooked.
3 To make the sauce, put the cream, butter and chocolate in a small pan and stir over low heat until melted and smooth. Unmould the warm puddings onto plates. If they are reluctant to come out, run a knife around the edges of the mould. Serve with chocolate cream sauce. Can also be served with crème anglaise and decorated with chocolate curls (see page 238).



BELOW: Hazelnut puddings



**BRIOCHE DOUGH**

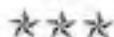
Brioche dough, as used here, is a rich dough containing up to half its weight in butter, plus other enriching ingredients such as sugar and eggs. These ingredients all contribute to a softer, more crumbly texture which makes the dough a little harder to handle. Lots of kneading and slow rising help this dough take on a smoothness. Yeast needs a little sugar to help it rise, but too much sugar will inhibit it and have the reverse effect. The sugar syrups for the savarin and babas are what give them their sweetness.

PINEAPPLE SAVARIN

Preparation time: 40 minutes + rising

Total cooking time: 40 minutes

Serves 6–8



7 g (1/4 oz) dried yeast

2/3 cup (170 ml/5 1/2 fl oz) unsweetened pineapple juice, warmed

2 teaspoons caster sugar

2 cups (250 g/8 oz) plain flour

3 eggs, lightly beaten

90 g (3 oz) unsalted butter, softened

Rum syrup

1 cup (250 g/8 oz) caster sugar

1 1/2 cups (375 ml/12 fl oz) unsweetened pineapple juice

5 cm (2 inch) piece lemon rind

1/2 cup (125 ml/4 fl oz) dark rum

- 1 Grease a 25 cm (10 inch) deep savarin ring. Dissolve the yeast in the pineapple juice, then stir in the sugar. Set aside for 5 minutes, or until frothy. Sift the flour and 1/4 teaspoon salt into a large bowl. Add the yeast and eggs and beat with a cupped hand for 5 minutes. Add the butter and beat by hand for 5 minutes. Cover and set aside in a warm place for 45 minutes, or until bubbly and well-risen. Press down on the dough to push the air out, and beat by hand for 1–2 minutes.
- 2 Ladle into the ring and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Set aside in a warm place for 10 minutes. Preheat the oven to moderately hot 190°C (375°F/Gas 5). Bake on a baking tray for 25 minutes, or until firm and golden (it may overflow a little in the centre).
- 3 Meanwhile, to make the rum syrup, stir the sugar, juice and rind in a small pan over low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Bring to the boil and boil, without stirring, for 10–15 minutes, or until slightly thickened. Remove the rind. Add the rum.
- 4 When the savarin is cooked, trim to a flat base with a knife. Turn out of the tin and stand on a rack over a tray. Prick all over with a toothpick. While the savarin is still hot, drizzle with rum syrup, pouring the excess back from where it is caught in the tray, until all the syrup is absorbed.

ABOVE: Pineapple savarin

RUM BABA WITH FIGS

Preparation time: 40 minutes + standing

Total cooking time: 30 minutes

Makes 10

☆☆☆

1½ cups (185 g/6 oz) plain flour

7 g (¼ oz) dried yeast

2 teaspoons sugar

½ cup (80 ml/2¾ fl oz) lukewarm milk

80 g (2¾ oz) unsalted butter, chopped

3 eggs, lightly beaten

1½ cups (375 g/12 oz) caster sugar

½ cup (80 ml/2¾ fl oz) dark rum, plus

2 tablespoons, extra

¼ cup (240 g/7½ oz) apricot jam

4–6 fresh figs

1 Brush ten 125 ml (4 fl oz) dariole or baba moulds lightly with oil. Place 1 tablespoon of the flour with the yeast, sugar, milk and ¼ teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Leave, covered with plastic wrap, in a warm place for about 10 minutes, or until foamy. Using just your fingertips, rub the butter into the remaining flour in a large bowl, until the mixture has a fine crumbly texture.

2 Add the yeast mixture and the eggs to the flour mixture. Beat with a cupped hand for 2 minutes, until smooth and glossy. Scrape the mixture down the side of the bowl. Leave, covered with plastic wrap, in a warm place for 45 minutes, until well risen.

3 Preheat the oven to hot 210°C (415°F/ Gas 6–7). Using a wooden spoon or your hand, beat the mixture again for 2 minutes. Divide among the prepared tins. Set aside, covered with plastic wrap, for another 10 minutes, until well risen.

4 Bake for 20 minutes, until golden brown. Meanwhile, combine the sugar with 2 cups (500 ml/16 fl oz) water in a pan. Stir over low heat, without boiling, until the sugar has completely dissolved. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat slightly and simmer, without stirring, for 15 minutes. Remove from the heat, cool slightly and add the rum.

5 Turn the babas out onto a wire rack placed over a shallow baking tray. Prick all over with a toothpick. Brush the warm babas liberally with warm rum syrup until well soaked, then allow to drain. Pour the excess syrup from the baking tray into a jug, straining if necessary to remove any crumbs.

6 Heat the apricot jam in a small pan or in the microwave, then strain through a fine sieve. Add the extra rum, stir to combine and brush warm jam all over the babas, to glaze. To serve, place one or two babas on each plate, drizzle a pool of reserved syrup around them. Cut the figs in half and serve beside the babas.

NOTE: Rum babas are best served on the day they are made. If you do not have dariole or baba moulds, use empty baked bean tins. The 130 g (4½ oz) size is best. Wash and dry the tins thoroughly and prepare as directed.

A baba is a yeasted, open-textured cake which is soaked in rum and sugar syrup. It originated in Poland, baba meaning 'old woman'. Babas sometimes include raisins in their dough.



RUM BABA



Use your cupped hand to beat the mixture vigorously.

ABOVE: Rum baba with figs

QUEEN OF PUDDINGS

Preparation time: 15 minutes + soaking

Total cooking time: 55 minutes

Serves 6

★ ★

- 1 cup (80 g/2¾ oz) fresh white breadcrumbs
- 2 cups (500 ml/16 fl oz) milk, scalded
- 2 eggs, separated
- ⅓ cup (90 g/3 oz) sugar
- 3 tablespoons strawberry jam
- 150 g (5 oz) strawberries, sliced

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Place the breadcrumbs in a bowl with the hot milk and leave for 10 minutes. Beat the egg yolks with half the sugar and stir into the crumb mixture.

2 Spoon the custard into a greased ovenproof dish and bake for 45 minutes, or until firm. Reduce the oven to warm 160°C (315°F/Gas 2-3).

3 Combine the jam and sliced strawberries and spread over the custard. Whisk the egg whites until stiff, then beat in the remaining sugar to form a meringue. Swirl over the top. Bake for 8-10 minutes, or until the meringue is set and lightly browned. Serve hot or warm.



BELOW: Apple charlotte



APPLE CHARLOTTE

Preparation time: 50 minutes

Total cooking time: 40 minutes

Serves 8

★ ★

- 1.25 kg (2 lb 8 oz) cooking apples, peeled, cored and sliced
- ½ cup (125 g/4 oz) caster sugar
- rind of 1 lemon
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 30 g (1 oz) unsalted butter
- 1 loaf sliced white bread, crusts removed
- a little softened unsalted butter

Garnish

- 20 g (¾ oz) unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 large apple, peeled, cored and sliced
- 200 ml (6½ fl oz) orange juice

1 Cook the apples in a large pan with the sugar, lemon rind, cinnamon stick and butter, over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the apples are tender and the mixture is thick.

2 Preheat the oven to moderately hot 200°C (400°F/Gas 6). Brush eight 125 ml (4 fl oz) ramekins with melted butter, or a 1.25 litre capacity charlotte tin or pudding basin. To make the mini-charlottes, cut 16 rounds of bread, spread with softened butter and put a round in each ramekin, buttered-side-down. Cut the remaining bread into wide strips, butter and use to line the sides of the ramekins, either cutting to fit, or overlapping a little, with the buttered side against the ramekin. Spoon the apple into the ramekins, pressing down firmly. Put the remaining buttered rounds of bread on top, buttered-side-up. Press down firmly and bake for 15 minutes, or until golden.

3 For the large charlotte, cut a round of bread to fit the base and wide strips to line the sides. Leave enough bread to cover the top. Butter the bread and line the mould, butter-side-out. Fill with the apple, cover with the remaining bread and bake for 30-40 minutes. Cover if it starts to overbrown. Cool a little before turning out.

4 For the garnish, melt the butter, add the sugar and stir to dissolve. Add the apple and brown lightly. Add the juice, bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer until cooked. Remove the apple and reduce the syrup by two-thirds. Put apple on the charlotte, pour syrup over and serve.



ALMOND ORANGE SYRUP PUDDING

Preparation time: 45 minutes
Total cooking time: 50 minutes
Serves 6-8



125 g (4 oz) unsalted butter
¾ cup (185 g/6 oz) caster sugar
2 eggs, lightly beaten
3 teaspoons finely grated orange rind
1½ cups (280 g/9 oz) ground almonds
1 cup (125 g/4 oz) semolina
¼ cup (60 ml/2 fl oz) orange juice
250 g (8 oz) blueberries, to decorate
icing sugar, to dust
thick (double) cream, optional, for serving

Syrup

1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) orange juice,
strained
½ cup (125 g/4 oz) caster sugar

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4). Lightly brush a 20 cm (8 inch) ring tin with oil or melted butter and line the base with baking paper.

2 Using electric beaters, beat the butter and sugar in a small bowl until light and creamy. Add the eggs gradually, beating well after each addition. Add the rind and beat to combine.

3 Transfer to a large bowl. Using a metal spoon, fold in the almonds and semolina alternately with the juice. Stir until just combined and the mixture is smooth. Spoon into the tin and smooth the surface. Bake for 40 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean.

4 To make the syrup, stir the juice and sugar in a small pan over low heat, until the sugar completely dissolves. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat slightly and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool slightly.

5 Pour half the warm syrup over the warm cake while still in the tin. Leave for 3 minutes, then place the cake onto a serving plate. Brush the remaining syrup over the cake, then allow to cool. Fill the centre with blueberries dusted with icing sugar. Serve with cream if you wish.

ORANGES

There are two main types of orange, the Valencia and the navel. Valencia oranges, available in summer, have a thin, light orange peel and a virtually seedless juicy flesh. Navel oranges, a winter fruit, have a characteristic depression or navel at one end and a dark, thick peel which comes off easily. They also segment well and are very good eating oranges. Blood oranges have a sweet but sharp taste and their dark red flesh and juice give deep colour to desserts.



ABOVE: Almond orange syrup pudding



SEMOLINA, SAGO and TAPIOCA

Semolina is a kind of wheat flour. The name derives from *simola*, a fine wheat flour in Latin, and *semola*, Italian for bran. Semolina is the coarse particles left when wheat is milled, then sifted. Semolina sprinkled in the base of a fruit tart soaks up any excess juice.

Sago is made from the powdered starch made from the pith of various palm trees, including the sago palm. The name is from the Malay, *sagu*. It is a flavourless, easily digested starch, sometimes sold as 'seed tapioca'.

Tapioca is starch from the cassava or manioc root. The moist starch is shaken in drops onto a hot plate which makes it form 'pearls'. Tapioca and sago are interchangeable.



SEMOLINA

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Total cooking time: 30 minutes
Serves 6



$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (90 g/3 oz) semolina
2 cups (500 ml/16 fl oz) milk
4 tablespoons sugar
40 g (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz) unsalted butter
2 tablespoons ground almonds
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla essence
2 eggs
50 g (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz) blanched almonds, optional,
for serving

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Combine the semolina, milk and 3 tablespoons of the sugar in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 10 minutes, stirring continuously, until thick. When cooked, add the butter, ground almonds, vanilla essence and eggs. Mix until well combined.

2 Pour into six 125 ml (4 fl oz) ramekins or

moulds, sprinkle with the remaining sugar and bake for 15 minutes, or until golden brown. When baked, score the top with a hot metal skewer. (Heat the skewer over a gas flame or on an electric ring. When it is very hot, lay it across the top of the pudding until it leaves a mark. Repeat to form a pattern.)

3 To serve, roast the blanched almonds, if using, until golden brown, chop finely and sprinkle over the top.

COCONUT TAPIOCA

Combine $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g/5 oz) small pearl tapioca and $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups (875 ml/28 fl oz) coconut milk in a large heavy-based pan with a vanilla bean. Stir over low heat until the tapioca pearls turn translucent, about 15 minutes. Keep stirring so the tapioca doesn't stick and burn. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 g/4 oz) caster sugar and stir until dissolved. Transfer the tapioca to a bowl, leave to cool, then refrigerate until cold. Serve in small dishes with a little coconut milk poured over, and sprinkled with chopped pistachio nuts.

ABOVE: Semolina