

Summer Pudding

The classic summer pudding is an easy and delicious way of combining the summer fruits you have picked on your allotment or garden or harvested from your local pick your own. Whilst I have included a list of ingredients, the joy of this pudding is that you can mix together all manner of summer berry fruits to make this dish. I once made it with blackcurrants only, adding a splash of an orange-based fruit liqueur for extra flavour and it was delicious.

You will need:

- 8 slices of white bread
- 2 lb of berry fruits, which can include raspberries, blackcurrants, redcurrants, blackberries, strawberries or tayberries. (You can add cherries too, but best to remove their pips before adding to the mix)
- 4oz to 6oz (125g-150g) caster sugar
- 1 ½ pint pudding basin, lightly buttered

Method:

- Prepare the fruit by removing stalks or any greenery, wash gently and place in large saucepan with 4oz of the sugar (Add more sugar if the mix proves too sharp when cooked).
- Place saucepan over a very gentle heat and cook for about 5 minutes, or until the juices begin to weep from the fruits. Do not let this mix cook for too long or the flavour will be spoiled and the fruit will break up.
- Taste, stirring in a little more sugar if needed.
- Cut the crusts from the bread slices, then cut them in half longways, leaving one slice that can be cut into a round and used to fill the hole in the bottom.
- Line the pudding basin with the slices of bread, allowing them to overlap so there are no gaps. Place a circle of bread at the bottom of the dish.
- Spoon the fruit mix into the bread lined dish with a slatted spoon, so that it is filled with fruit rather than juice, retaining any juice left over to pour over the pudding before you serve it.
- Cover the top with more overlapping slices of bread, trim if necessary, then place a saucer over the top and then a weight, such as a tin of soup on top of the saucer.
- Place the pudding in the refrigerator and let it rest for at least 12 hours.
- Before serving, turn out into a large serving dish and spoon the reserved juice and any cooked fruit left over onto the top of the pudding.
- Serve with lashings of clotted cream.

NOTE: for extra flavour try adding a fruit liqueur to the juices.