

Gill's Gourmet Gallery

The ultimate sticky toffee pudding!

For the pudding: 450g whole dates, 350ml boiling water, 2tsp vanilla extract, 350g self-raising flour, 2tsp bicarbonate of soda, 4 eggs, 170g, softened butter, plus extra for greasing, 280g demerara sugar, 4tbsp black treacle, 200ml milk

For the toffee sauce: 250g light muscovado sugar, 100g butter cut into pieces, 440ml double cream, 2 tbsp black treacle

Method:

Stone and chop the dates quite small, put them in a bowl, then pour the boiling water over. Leave for about 30 mins until cool and well-soaked, then mash with a fork. Stir in the vanilla extract. Butter and flour a 9 inch baking tin. Heat oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. While the dates are soaking, make the pudding. Mix the flour and bicarbonate of soda together and beat the eggs in a separate bowl. Beat the butter and sugar together in a large bowl for a few minutes. Add the eggs a little at a time, beating well between additions. If the mixture curdles add a tablespoon of flour. Beat in the black treacle then, using a large metal spoon, gently fold in one-third of the flour, then half the milk, being careful not to overbeat. Repeat until all the flour and milk is used. Stir the soaked dates into the pudding batter. Spoon it evenly in to the tin and bake for 30 to 35mins, until risen and firm.

Meanwhile, put the sugar and butter for the sauce in to a medium saucepan with half the cream. Bring to the boil over a medium heat, stirring all the time until the sugar has completely dissolved. Stir in the black treacle, turn up the heat slightly and let the mixture bubble away for 2-3 mins until it is a rich toffee colour stirring occasionally to make sure it doesn't burn. Take the pan off the heat and beat in the rest of the cream. Cover with cling film to stop a skin forming. Remove the pudding from the oven. Leave in the tin for a few mins, then loosen it well from the sides of the tin using a small palette knife. Now turn the pudding out and place upside down back in the tin. Pour the sauce over the pudding and serve with ice cream, custard or cream.

