

Christmas recipies

MINCE PIES | BBC recipe

Ingredients

- 225g cold butter, diced
- 350g plain flour
- 100g golden caster sugar
- 280g mincemeat (buy at Bobby's or order online, Haas & Haas, Christmas Bazaars)
- 1 small egg, beaten
- icing sugar, to dust



Method

1. To make the pastry, rub the butter into the flour, then mix in the golden caster sugar and a pinch of salt.
2. Combine the pastry into a ball – don't add liquid – and knead it briefly. The dough will be fairly firm, like shortbread dough. You can use the dough immediately, or chill for later.
3. Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Line 18 holes of two 12-hole patty tins, by pressing small walnut-sized balls of pastry into each hole.
4. Spoon the mincemeat into the pies. Take slightly smaller balls of pastry than before and pat them out between your hands to make round lids, big
5. Top the pies with their lids, pressing the edges gently together to seal – you don't need to seal them with milk or egg as they will stick on their own. Will keep frozen for up to one month.
6. Brush the tops of the pies with the beaten egg. Bake for 20 mins until golden. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 mins, then remove to a wire rack. To serve, lightly dust with the icing sugar. Will keep for three to four days in an airtight container.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING | by Nigel Slater

Ingredients

- 350g/12¼oz sultanas
- 350g/12¼oz raisins or currants
- 150g/5¼oz dried figs, chopped
- 125g/4½oz candied peel
- 100g/3½oz dried apricots
- 75g/2½oz dark glacé cherries, halved
- 150ml/5fl oz brandy
- 100g/3½oz ginger in syrup, chopped, plus 2 tbsp of the syrup
- 2 apples or quinces, grated
- 2 oranges, juice and zest
- 6 eggs, beaten
- 250g/8¾oz shredded suet
- 350g/12¼oz soft muscovado sugar
- 250g/8¾oz fresh breadcrumbs
- 175g/6¼oz self-raising flour
- 1 tsp mixed spice



Method

1. For this recipe you will need two 1.5 litre (2½ pint) plastic pudding basins with lids.
2. Soak the sultanas, raisins, currants, figs, peel, apricots and cherries in the brandy overnight, giving it a good stir now and again.
3. The following day, in a large bowl mix the ginger, syrup, apples or quinces, orange juice and zest with the eggs, suet, sugar, crumbs and flour.
4. Stir in the soaked fruit and spice.
5. Grease the two pudding basins and divide the mix between them. Add coins now if using.
6. Cut two circles of greaseproof paper to cover the top of the pudding and fold a pleat down the centre to allow pudding to expand.
7. Put lids on the basins and steam puddings for 3½ hours.
8. Let puddings cool before removing greaseproof paper and covering tightly with cling film and lid. The puddings can now be stored in a cool, dry place until Christmas.
9. To reheat, steam pudding for a further 3½ hours, turn out and flame with brandy.

Brandy Butter for your Christmas Pudding

Ingredients

- 200g salted butter, softened
- 175g icing sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla paste, or seeds scraped from 1 vanilla pod
- 5-7 tbsp brandy



Method

- Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla together until pale, then whisk in the brandy, one tbsp at a time, until you are pleased with the taste. *Scrape into a serving bowl and chill for 1 hr or for up to 3 days, before serving. Freeze for up to a month.*

White Sauce for your Christmas Pudding

Ingredients

- 55g/2oz butter
- 55g/2oz plain flour
- 570ml/1 pint milk
- 4 tbsp brandy or dark rum
- 55g/2oz caster sugar



Method

1. In a small saucepan, melt the butter and stir in the flour. Cook for 2 minutes and then stir in the milk. Bring to the boil, stirring all the time, and simmer gently for 10 minutes.
2. Stir in the brandy (or rum) and the sugar and serve with Christmas pudding.