



Dark Sticky Pudding

“A Rose by any other name...”

There are some things in life (and not just fancy products with a pile of money behind them) which absolutely require renaming and relaunching. Prunes are a much maligned fruit and in my opinion might benefit from such a revamp. I had a lovely prune and armagnac creme brulee the other day and a friend said “only the french could get away with selling that”. Excuse me! I beg to differ.

The basis of the recipe comes via a very old Cranks book but this is my personal take on it which, satisfyingly, has proved highly popular amongst both friends and family.

Dish

A 2” deep easy release tin with its independent base – about 10” diameter – greased and lined with baking parchment. Ensure parchment raises over the tin by at least 1”. Heat oven to 180c.

175g prunes (Agen if you access them, if not as good a quality as possible)

I buy the pitted ones for ease.

Cut up into small pieces and cover with brandy or armagnac. Leave to absorb.

Meanwhile put below ingredients in a bowl and whisk thoroughly until smooth:-

100g raw dark muscavado sugar

1/2 tspn bicarbonate of soda

100ml sunflower oil

2 medium free range eggs

Stir in the following, then beat well

150g self raising flour

1 tspn ground cinnamon

1 tspn plus a bit mixed spice

1/2 tspn ground nutmeg

pinch ground ginger

And lastly, add:-

The prunes and armagnac

50g grated high quality dark chocolate

100ml plain yoghurt

Stir well then pour into the prepared tin.

Cook for half an hour – or until firm.

Meanwhile, in a pan, heat up:-

50g muscavado sugar

50ml plain yoghurt

1 tblspn molasses

1 tspn vanilla essence

The sponge is left in the tin to cool, so when you remove it from the oven, skewer it all over, then spoon on the sauce from the pan. Leave to cool.

Release from the tin, carefully peel away the parchment.

I prefer to then wrap the cake in foil and leave it in an air tight container for a couple of days to get it to go a bit sticky and allow the flavours to ‘settle in’.

Prior to serving grate some more chocolate over the top.

I like to serve it with a dollop of soured cream or crème fraiche.