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Chocolate orange & fig Christmas pudding

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SERVES 10-12 PREP 20 mins plus overnight soaking COOK 5 hrs EASY V

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100g currants
100g raisins
100g sultanas
100g dried figs, chopped
2 large oranges, zested
100ml orange liqueur (Cointreau or Grand Marnier)
100ml orange juice
butter, for the pudding basin
110g vegetarian shredded suet
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
30g self-raising flour
50g cocoa powder
½ tsp salt
100g fresh breadcrumbs
100g dark muscovado sugar
125g light brown soft sugar
1 tsp mixed spice
150g orange chocolate, roughly chopped
icing sugar and thick cream, to serve (optional)

1 Tip the currants, raisins, sultanas and figs into a large mixing bowl. Stir through the orange zest, liqueur and juice. Cover and leave to sit overnight – the fruit will soak up the liquid and become plump and juicy.

2 The next day, liberally butter a 1.2-litre plastic pudding basin with a lid. Stir the suet, eggs, flour, cocoa powder, salt, breadcrumbs, sugars and spice through the mixture until well incorporated. Add the chunks of chocolate, giving everything a thorough final mix.

3 Spoon the mixture into the basin and smooth over the top, leaving a 1cm gap at the top to allow it to rise. Firmly seal with the lid. Set your pudding in a steamer over a pan of simmering water and steam for 5 hrs. Make sure you keep an eye on the water, regularly topping it up. Leave to cool completely. *Store in a cool, dark place for up to eight weeks.*

4 When you're ready to serve, reheat the pudding by placing the basin, with the lid on, on a microwavable plate. Microwave on high for 4 mins, leave to stand for 1 min, then heat again for a final 4 mins. Alternatively, steam for 1 hr. Turn out onto a serving plate, dust with icing sugar and serve with thick cream, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW 1 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING (12) 383 kJ • fat 12g • saturates 6g • carbs 58g • sugars 49g • fibre 3g • protein 5g • salt 0.4g



Our chef's secret twist

'Try something different this year with my chocolate orange and fig-laden pudding – a twist on a traditional Christmas pud. It can

be made up to eight weeks ahead – one less thing to do in the run-up to Christmas!' **Esther Clark,**
Deputy food editor



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