

PX & Date Puddings

This simple dessert is inspired by part of a far more elaborate Cheong Liew recipe from his book *My Food*. He adds ginger for an extra dimension, so stir 2 teaspoons of ginger juice into the batter if you like ginger's pepperiness (made by squeezing about 1 tablespoon of finely grated ginger). Cheong marinates his dates in muscat whereas, being a Sherry lover, I've opted for pedro ximénez (PX) Sherry and serve an extra nip or 2 alongside! More than anyone, Cheong has taught me that recipes aren't blue-prints to be followed slavishly but guidelines to use as a starting point for your own inspiration; so take his recipes and mine as inspiration for your own kitchen adventures and have fun!

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 90g pitted dates, roughly chopped
- 30ml PX Sherry
- 100g butter
- 75g castor sugar
- 1 egg
- 90g plain flour
- ¾ teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt flakes, crushed
- Icing sugar, for dusting
- Crème fraîche or whipped cream, for serving



METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Place dates and Sherry in a bowl, mix well and set aside for 30 minutes or so.
3. Place butter and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer and beat until pale and fluffy.
4. Add egg and beat to incorporate well.
5. Sift in combined flour, baking powder and salt and fold it in to form a smooth batter.
6. Stir in date mixture.
7. Pour into greased, ½-cup ramekins and bake for 15-20 minutes, until they've shrunk away from the sides of the ramekins and a skewer inserted comes out almost clean.
8. Set aside to cool a little.
9. Turn out onto plates, dust with icing sugar and serve warm with crème fraîche or whipped cream.