

Sticky Toffee Pudding

Tutorial with Step by Step Pictures

by Stephen Block



When I was in Australia this is what my chef friend Warren Lower said this was one of his favorite desserts. I thought how odd? First of all ..."sticky" but I was intrigued and then I found out it was also a great Irish and English desert. But it is a cake, why would you call it pudding? I was informed that years ago pudding was a loose term for any dessert. For our St. Patrick's Day party this went over the best of anything. I never have had as much excitement about a dessert. Well it is the dates, and the fresh vanilla extract what can I say.



Ingredients for the Cake (pudding):

12 ounces dates, pitted and chopped
2 cups water
2 teaspoon baking soda
3-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
1-2/3 cups granulated sugar
4 large eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla



Toffee Sauce:

**8 tablespoons butter
2-1/2 cups brown sugar
1 cup heavy cream
1/4 teaspoon vanilla or
1 teaspoon brandy**



Soften the Dates

I do this to make them easier to chop and not so sticky. You can omit this step if you want.



Chop the dates fine with a knife or food processor

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine the chopped dates and water in a sauce pan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in baking soda; set aside.



Putting Together the Cake Batter

In a bowl, combine flour and baking powder. In a separate bowl, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add 2 eggs and mix until combined. Add remaining 2 eggs and vanilla. Add 1/3 of flour mixture and 1/3 of date mixture and mix until combined. Repeat until all the flour and dates are incorporated into batter.



Choosing a Baking Vessel

Spray a glass baking dish with non-stick spray or with a bit of oil or butter. This is a 13 by 9 glass baking dish. Something similar is fine. Some like to put parchment paper down in the pan so they can turn out the cake onto a platter when it is done. Some also like to bake them in a muffin tin or a mold of some sort. The sky is the limit.



Pour the batter into the baking dish and smooth it out.



Baking the Cake

This is ready for the oven, place it in the center of the oven. For protection I always put a cookie sheet under the cake so the bottom of the pan is not exposed to direct heat from the elements.



Preping the Cake for Topping

I used a large item to poke holes here like a " long steel" or knife sharpener. you could use a skewer or pencil. I was looking for large holes because I really wanted the toffee to go into the cake.



Making the Toffee Sauce

Put all the ingredients into the sauce pan and bring to a simmer.
Let the sauce cook for about 3-5 minutes, it will get thick.
Set the timer or make sure you don't walk away from it. It will turn to candy if you boil it too long.



Toffee Sauce on the Cake

Pour 3/4 of the toffee sauce onto the cake like this, and smooth it out with a rubber spatula. I reserved some of the sauce to pour over the cake and around it for a nice presentation.



Presenting your dessert

You can make any kind of a nice display like this.

**I just dipped the walnut halves in water and then rolled them in vanilla sugar and roasted them for a few minutes on the stove top
I also soaked some dried cherries in brandy.
powdered sugar looks wonderful on top of the cake as well.**

Here are some other ideas for presentation

