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COLD DESSERTS FOR CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS Pudding is traditional and really part of Christmas dinner. But for our summertime Christmas season we need trifles and Pavlovas and lots of cold sweets.

Strawberry Trifle

Stir 3 tablespoons of castor sugar into 1lb. prepared strawberries, and set aside. Make a custard with 1 cup milk, 1 dessertspoon sugar, 2 eggs and any flavouring liked. Set this aside also, to cool. Spread the two halves of a sponge sandwich with the strawberries, cut into pieces and pile into a deep glass dish, with 2 sliced bananas sprinkled among them. Sprinkle also with lemon juice, and pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sherry over all. If children are to share in this, use tinned or fresh fruit-juice instead of the sherry, adding a little sugar. Now pour the cooled custard over all, and set away in cool place. Whip up $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of good top-milk, sweeten and decorate trifle with it, adding a few whole strawberries and some blanched and split almonds. Raspberries may be substituted for strawberries.

New Plymouth Trifle

From 1lb. strawberries keep out a dozen of the best. Pulp up the rest with 3 tablespoons of castor sugar. Cut up sufficient day-old sponge cake into pieces, and put a layer into deep glass dish. Cover with a layer of pulped strawberries. Pour over this a little thick boiled custard, made with eggs or custard powder. Now put more cake, then more strawberry-pulp, then more custard, till all is used up. Whisk up a teacup of cream and into it stir lightly but thoroughly the whites of 2 eggs beaten to a stiff froth. Heap this mixture over the trifle, and decorate with whole strawberries and chopped nuts or almonds.

Strawberry Pavlova

Whip the whites of 3 eggs to a stiff froth, adding gradually 6 tablespoons sugar. When so stiff that it will hold its shape, put it into a forcing-bag, or a twist of greaseproof paper, and force it out into a nice oval shape, on a sheet of wet greaseproof paper, piling it higher all round the sides to make a case. Bake in a cool oven for about 1½ hours till set, taking care it does not brown. Prepare a pound of strawberries. Whip up a cup of cream with a little sugar and desired flavouring until thick. Put the strawberries in the meringue-case, arrange the thick cream on top, and decorate with a few fresh strawberries. Place the case on a flat dish, and serve with a border of strawberries and green leaves.

Simple Trifle

Spread one half of stale sponge sandwich thickly with raspberry jam. Cut into pieces and arrange on fancy dish. Pour over a cupful of rich juice from stewed fruit, or tinned fruit-juice, or sherry. Leave to soak for an hour. Make a rich boiled custard with 2 slightly

beaten eggs and a little sugar and $\frac{3}{4}$ pint of milk; cook in a double-saucepan or in a basin or jug standing in an outer pan of boiling water. Stir all the time it is thickening, *one way only*. Do not let it boil, unless you have added a teaspoon of cornflour, when it must come to boiling point for a minute or two. Pour this custard over the soaked sponge-cake and set in cold place. Decorate with blobs of whipped cream and halved blanched almonds.

Ngauruhoe Snow

This is a variation on the American Baked Alaska — having strawberries pressed all over it, and a hot chocolate sauce poured on after taking from oven. The white of egg, being a non-conductor of heat, keeps the ice-cream from melting. Put round sponge cake on board. Beat 6 egg whites with wheel-beater until stiff enough to stand in peaks. Add a pinch of salt while beating. Have ready blocks of ice cream, and build them up on the sponge cake to represent a mountain. Stick this thickly all over with hulled strawberries. Fold into the beaten whites about half as much sugar as you would use for meringues. Put the meringue thickly and thoroughly all over the ice cream and sponge cake. Put into a hot oven for a few minutes, until meringue is a pretty brown. Meantime make chocolate sauce with water, icing sugar and cocoa. Remove "mountain" from oven, pour over the chocolate sauce to look like molten lava coming out of the crater. If for special occasion, heat some rum in the oven, and, last thing, pour the hot rum over, set a match to it, put out the light in the room and bring in the dish.

Strawberry Jelly De Luxe

Make up 1 packet of strawberry jelly crystals and 1 packet of lemon jelly crystals. Put them into separate dishes and let them cool. Then make a shortcake of $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. butter; $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar; 1 egg; 1 cup flour; $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder. Beat butter (or substitute) and sugar, add egg, then flour and rising, and knead well. Roll out $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness, and bake about 20 minutes until nice and crisp. Put baked shortcake on to a board to cool. When jelly is almost set, beat up strawberry jelly until frothy and pour over shortcake, then spread on some fresh strawberries. Beat up lemon jelly the same way and pour over strawberries and leave to set. Top next day with cream and sprinkle with nuts. Cut into fingers and serve with cold custard. Other flavours of jelly may be used, and also other fruits if strawberries are not available—e.g., raspberries.

Melrose Cream

Make 1 pint custard stiff, and some jelly—don't let jelly quite set. Now take basin and put layer of cold custard at bottom of basin, then layer of jelly, continuing alternately till dish is full. Different coloured jellies make this dish very pretty. When dish is full decorate with fruit and put aside to set. Can be cut in slices when set, and is delicious.