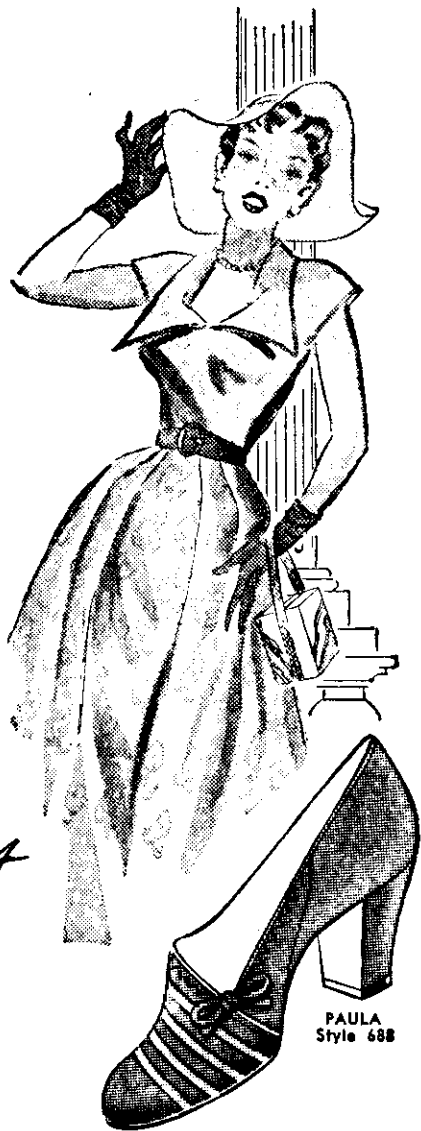


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## Ask Aunt Daisy

### Christmas Puddings and Mince Pies

**I**F you don't want to make your Christmas puddings yet, at least make your mincemeat—if you didn't do it while apples were plentiful—and save this page for the pudding recipes. It's a comfort to have puddings made by Christmas Day. It has only to be put on and re-boiled—the longer the better, but a couple of hours is enough to heat it thoroughly.

#### Melbourne Plum Pudding

This is really rich. One pound each seeded raisins, currants, shredded suet, breadcrumbs; 3 small apples, 2 teaspoons mixed spice, a little salt, ¼ lb. flour, ½ lb. brown sugar, about ½ pint milk, 5 eggs, 3 oz. mixed peel. Mix together all dry ingredients except sugar. Put eggs into separate basin, and beat well with sugar and a little milk. Mix with dry ingredients. Boil or steam 5 hours or more.

#### Hard Sauce (Christmas)

Unwhipped cream is the easiest, most delicious sauce to serve with Christmas pudding, but this hard sauce is a popular American idea: ½ lb. castor sugar, ¼ lb. butter, 2 oz. ground almonds, 2 tablespoons brandy (or sherry). Cream well butter and sugar. Mix in well ground almonds and add brandy. Cream all well together. Serve piled in a pretty dish. Another method: Beat 2 cups sugar with one cup creamed butter, add a beaten egg, and thin to nice consistency with brandy, or brandy essence and water.

#### Christmas Pudding

One and a half cups flour, 1 breakfast cut suet, 1 breakfast cup breadcrumbs, 1 cup each raisins, sultanas, currants, ½ lb. mixed peel, 1 lb. glace cherries, 1 teaspoon each spice and baking soda, 1 small cup golden syrup, ½ cup brown sugar, ¼ lb. almonds, 1 large or 2 small eggs, cup milk, wineglass brandy, grated rind 1 orange. Mix as for a plum pudding. Boil 4 or 5 hours.

#### Family Christmas Pudding

Less expensive, this makes a good large pudding: 1 large cup breadcrumbs, 1½ cups flour, 1 cup shredded suet, ¾ teacup brown sugar, 1 lb. mixed fruit, 1 teaspoon baking powder, ½ teaspoon baking soda, 1 teaspoon spice, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, ½ teaspoon nutmeg, 1 teaspoon caramel essence. Mix all dry ingredients in basin, add essence to a little milk (about ¼ cup). Add two eggs (beaten) to milk and flavouring, and mix all well together. Put into greased basin. Steam 3½ hours or longer.

#### Christmas Pudding (Butter)

This is favoured by some who find suet heating in summer: 6 oz. butter, 6 oz. brown sugar, 5 eggs, 2 oz. fine white breadcrumbs, ½ lb. raisins, ½ lb. sultanas, ½ lb. currants, ¼ lb. citron peel chopped finely, ¼ lb. almonds, 1 teaspoon grated nutmeg, 1 gill brandy (optional), 1 teaspoon baking soda (small) dissolved in 1 tablespoon milk, salt-spoon salt, ½ lb. flour. Cream butter and sugar, followed by eggs, flour and fruit with baking soda. Place in greased basin, fill basin to brim, cover with butter paper, and pudding cloth. Steam 4 hours.

#### Christmas Pudding (No Flour)

One pound each breadcrumbs, suet, sugar, mixed fruit, a little salt, grated

rind 2 lemons and juice of 1, 4 eggs, glass brandy (optional). Mix well. Cook 5 hours. Make some days before Christmas.



#### Christmas Mincemeat

Mince pies are really essential for a family Christmas. The pastry may be flaky or short—but short is the favourite, especially for children. Have large, deep patty pans and roll pastry thinly, so there's room for plenty of mincemeat. Line patty pans with pastry, pile in mincemeat, and cover with top crust, decorating edges with a fork.

Mincemeat: 1 lb. apples, ¼ lb. suet, ½ lb. raisins, 1 lb. brown sugar, ¼ lb. lemon peel, ½ lb. currants, 1 teaspoon spice, ½ teaspoon salt, 2 tablespoons

#### SPECIAL

#### Christmas Custard Cake for Inchbonnie

**TWO** pounds of flour, 4 teaspoons baking soda, 2 lb. sultanas, 1 lb. currants or raisins, ½ lb. peel, 1 lb. sugar, 1 lb. butter, 4 eggs, ¼ lb. almonds, grated nutmeg (about ½ teaspoon), 1 dessertspoon almond essence, 1 dessertspoon lemon essence, 1 pint boiling milk. Rub butter into flour, mix all dry ingredients, beat eggs slightly, pour boiling milk over eggs, add essences. Add to dry ingredients and mix well. Bake about 5 hours. Wet mixture.

brandy, juice and grated rind of half a lemon. Mince fruit and suet. Mix all, adding brandy last. Seal jars carefully. Keeps well.

#### Mincemeat (Old-fashioned)

One cup each chopped currants, raisins, apples, suet, 1 lemon (juice and grated rind), 1 oz. chopped candied peel, 1 oz. chopped almonds, a little nutmeg and spice, 1 cup brown sugar. Mix with a little brandy or rum. Keep in airtight jars.

#### Poor Man's Christmas Pudding

One cup each flour, raisins, breadcrumbs, currants, sugar, shredded suet, 1 teaspoon mixed spice, 4 oz. chopped almonds, 1 small teaspoon baking powder, 2 eggs, pinch salt, milk to mix. Sift flour and baking powder together, add other ingredients, eggs beaten, and lastly milk. Boil in basin 3 hours. Serve with sauce.

#### FROM THE MAILBAG

##### Cream Cheese

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I have recently returned from a trip to America, and while there I enjoyed their food very much indeed, especially some of their cream cheese recipes. I would like to try some of these myself, but find I cannot buy a cream cheese in Wellington, and am wondering if it is possible to make this at home. I would be very grateful if you have a satisfactory recipe. "M.H., Wellington."

Cream cheese is available quite plentifully in Wellington—and in New Zealand generally. Try the high-grade grocers and delicatessen counters. It is generally sold in small packets wrapped in silver paper, or white greaseproof. However, you can make it at home, but it is difficult and expensive to get enough cream. Cottage cheese is made