

# Summer Pudding

*Summer Pudding* is a great English classic. It's not hard to make; basically all you need is a mixture of summer berries and some slices of stale white bread. However:

- The berries should be principally raspberries and currants. Don't use too many blackcurrants as they can easily overpower any other flavours, also be sparing with strawberries.
- If you can't get all the berries fresh, you can use frozen summer fruits and add more raspberries
- Do not use supermarket sliced bread; get a loaf of good farmhouse bread—unless of course you make your own—slice it and leave it to dry out a bit, or give it a few minutes in a warm oven.

You will need a 1 litre pudding basin or mixing bowl.

## Ingredients

750-800g	mixed summer fruit (raspberries, redcurrants, white currants, cherries, blackberries, blackcurrants, strawberries)
150 g	caster sugar
approx. 8 slices	good quality white bread (medium loaf), <i>slightly stale, crusts removed</i>

## Method

Remove the stalks and stones from the fruit and halve the cherries and strawberries if using. Mix the fruit and sugar gently together and, if time permits, leave it to macerate for an hour or so (or overnight). Otherwise, put the fruit and sugar straight into a pan and heat very gently to melt the sugar and start the juices flowing. Bring it up to a simmer and cook for no more than 2–3 mins.

Line your bowl with the bread, cutting the slices to fit jigsaw-fashion, filling cracks and pressing the edges of the slices together to leave no gaps.

Fill with the fruit and juice, keeping back a cupful for later use. If there's any fruit left over, it can decorate the finished pudding. Cover the top with bread to make a lid and trim off any overhanging pieces from the sides.

Now put a small plate or saucer onto the top of the pudding, one that fits just inside the rim of the bowl to allow the contents to be weighted down. You're looking for about 2 kilos—if you don't have weights, use bags of rice, tins, or any heavy object to hand. Put it in the fridge with a plate underneath in case of juice spillage and leave it until ready to serve.

To serve, loosen the edges with a pallet knife and turn out onto a serving dish. Fill in any white patches of bread with the reserved juice and pour over any remaining fruit mixture.

Cut it like a cake and eat with plenty of cream, double or clotted.