Orange and Date Bread Pudding

2 warm bread-pudding portions, each with half the dates and orange custard | Active 19 min | Cook 6 min | Total 35 min (warm service)

Ingredients

- 100 g (3 1/2 oz) plain day-old bread, sound and unmolded, cut into 2 cm/3/4 in cubes
- 180 ml pasteurized milk (3/4 cup)
- 1 large egg, 50 g/1 3/4 oz without shell, fully beaten
- 40 g ready-to-eat pitted dates (1 1/2 oz), chopped into 5 mm/3⁄16 in pieces
- 30 ml orange juice (2 tbsp), seeds removed
- 1 g finely grated orange zest (about 1/2 tsp), colored peel only
- 15 g granulated sugar (about 1 tbsp plus 3/4 tsp)
- 5 g unsalted butter (about 1 tsp), all for greasing the cooking dish
- 0.5 g ground cinnamon (about 1/4 tsp)
- 0.3 g fine salt, a small pinch

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Spoon, Fork or small whisk, Oven mitts, Food thermometer used outside the microwave, Microwave-safe shallow casserole, at least 1 L/about 1 US qt measured usable capacity, with usable inside base about 18 ×13 cm/7 ×5 in and depth about 5 cm/2 in, Microwave-safe mixing bowl, at least 1.5 L/about 1 2/3 US qt capacity, Microwave-safe vented cover, Knife and board, Fine grater and citrus juicer, Pastry brush or clean spreading utensil, Two dessert bowls

Allergens

Wheat, Milk, Egg. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Whisk the milk, fully beaten egg, orange juice, zest, sugar, cinnamon and salt in the mixing bowl. Add all the bread and dates, fold through and leave for 10 minutes, folding once halfway, until the bread has absorbed much of the liquid.

2. Spread all 5 g butter over the inside of the 1 L shallow casserole. Transfer all the soaked bread mixture, scraping in every bit of custard and dates. Level gently; keep below two-thirds of usable capacity, using a larger microwave-safe shallow dish if necessary.

3. Cover with a vent and microwave at 1000 W baseline on 70% power for 3 minutes. Rotate the dish half a turn and move any very loose edge custard gently toward the center with the spoon. Cover again and cook 1 1/2-2 1/2 minutes more. Check several places, including the deepest center, for at least 165°F/74°C and no liquid egg. If needed, continue in 20-30-second bursts and recheck.

4. Once fully cooked, stand covered with the vent open for 2 minutes. Recheck that the custard is set throughout, then divide the entire pudding into two portions and serve warm in bowls. No browned crust, cream topping or extra dates are included.

Orange and Date Bread Pudding

2 warm bread-pudding portions, each with half the dates and orange custard | Active 19 min | Cook 6 min | Total 35 min (warm service)

One shallow layer

The measured dish keeps the soaked mixture in a modest depth. A tall narrow bowl changes the heating path and is not equivalent.

Use sound bread

Day-old means a little dry, not spoiled. Moldy bread is not rescued by this cook.

Ingredient labels

Bread may contain soy, sesame or other label allergens; dates can have added ingredients. Check the actual bread and milk substitutes. The soy-drink variation does not remove egg or wheat.

A useful detail

The 35-minute warm-service plan allows 10 minutes of preparation, the 10-minute bread soak, up to 6 minutes of heating, the 2-minute covered stand and 7 minutes for transferring, checks and serving. One 1000 W microwave cooks the whole shallow dish. Extra endpoint bursts can extend the total; do not shorten the soak or serve liquid egg to meet the clock.

Another way

Replace 40 g/1 1/2 oz dates with 40 g/1 1/2 oz ready-to-eat raisins, mixed into the cold custard with the bread.

Use 180 ml/3/4 cup unsweetened soy drink instead of milk and 5 g/about 1 tsp label-compatible plant-based spread instead of butter. Soy or other spread allergens may be added; egg and wheat remain.

Keep it well

Refrigerate fully cooked shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below. Use within 2 days or an earlier milk deadline. Reheat only the portion needed under a vented cover in short low-power bursts, stand 2 minutes and verify 165°F/74°C throughout. Do not save a partly cooked egg-and-bread mixture for later finishing.