Plum and Polenta Pudding

3 soft polenta desserts, each with one third of the cooked plums | Active 19 min | Cook 17 min | Total 40 min (warm service)

Ingredients

• 250 g (9 oz) prepared fresh ripe plums, washed, stones removed and flesh quartered into about 2 cm/3/4 in pieces

• 180 ml water (3/4 cup), divided into 30 ml for fruit and 150 ml for polenta

• 30 g granulated sugar (about 2 tbsp plus 1 1/4 tsp), divided into 15 g for fruit and 15 g for polenta

• 40 g fine quick-cooking polenta (1 1/2 oz), with a full label simmering interval around 3-5 minutes, not coarse cornmeal or cornstarch

• 200 ml pasteurized milk (about 3/4 cup plus 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp)

• 5 g unsalted butter (about 1 tsp)

• 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 fruit bowl, at least 1.5 L/about 1 2/3 US qt usable capacity, Microwave-safe polenta bowl, at least 2 L/about 2 1/8 US qt usable capacity and about 20 cm/8 in inside diameter, Microwave-safe vented fruit cover, Knife and board, Three shallow dessert bowls

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put the prepared plums, 30 ml/2 tbsp water, 15 g sugar and cinnamon in the 1.5 L bowl. Cover with a vent and microwave at 1000 W full power for 3 minutes. Stir gently and heat 3-5 minutes more, until the fruit is tender and its juice is hot. Keep the fruit and all its juice covered while the grain cooks.

2. Whisk the polenta, remaining 150 ml water, milk, remaining 15 g sugar and salt together while cold in the 2 L bowl. Microwave uncovered at full power for 2-3 minutes, stopping after 2 minutes to whisk, until the mixture begins to bubble gently. Attend it and pause sooner if it rises.

3. Reduce to 50% power and cook for 4-6 minutes, whisking every 2 minutes, until the fine grain is fully swollen and tender and the pudding is creamy. Complete at least the full product-directed simmering interval after bubbling starts; a longer actual label process extends the time. If any gritty grain remains, continue in 30-second bursts rather than using a raw-tasting shortcut.

4. Stir in all the butter and stand for 3 minutes. Divide the complete polenta pudding among three bowls. Spoon one third of the plums and their juice over each and serve warm. The pudding is soft and spoonable, not an unmolded set cake.

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A spoon pudding

A firm slicing or unmolding endpoint would change the liquid balance. Serve the measured creamy result in bowls.

Use three portions

The whole fruit and pudding batches are divided into three, not two large bowls plus an uncounted remainder.

Ingredient labels

Milk and butter contain milk. Polenta labels and cross-contact should be checked; the soy-drink version adds soy. No nuts or other toppings are part of the base dessert.

A useful detail

The 40-minute warm-service plan allows 10 minutes of preparation, up to 8 minutes of fruit heating and 9 minutes of grain heating, the 3-minute stand and 10 minutes for whisking and portioning. One 1000 W microwave handles the bowls sequentially. A different polenta product or firmer fruit can extend the cook.

Another way

Replace 250 g/9 oz prepared plums with 250 g/9 oz fresh ripe apricot flesh in similar pieces. Follow the same tender-fruit endpoint and retain all juice.

Use 200 ml/about 3/4 cup plus 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp unsweetened soy drink and 5 g/about 1 tsp plant-based spread instead of milk and butter. Soy or spread allergens may be added; the grain still needs its full product cook.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow pudding and fruit portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below. Use within 2 days. Reheat only the portion needed under a vented cover, with 15 ml/1 tbsp water if the polenta is thick; stir in short bursts, stand 2 minutes and verify 165°F/74°C throughout. Frozen fruit is not a direct raw replacement unless labeled ready to eat or given its full separate package cooking process.