

# Bread and Butter Pudding with Cardamom and Lime Custard

This recipe makes a pudding which is far lighter than any I have eaten in India, where the bread is first fried and then soaked in milk, sugar and eggs. The usual technique is to mash the mixture and sprinkle it with nuts before baking. My version is flavoured with cardamom, pistachio nuts and mixed dried fruit; moistened with eggs, sugar, cream and milk; and cooked in a bain marie to ensure that the result is moist and light. Finally, the top is caramelized with icing sugar. Cardamom and Lime Custard, a classic English custard enlivened with cardamom and fresh lime, goes just perfectly with the pudding.

## SERVES 4

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES, PLUS 2-4 HOURS'

STANDING TIME

COOKING TIME: 40-45 MINUTES

- 300ml (10fl oz) milk
- 300ml (10fl oz) double cream
- 1 vanilla pod, split and seeded, or 2 drops vanilla essence
- 90g (3oz) caster sugar
- 6 egg yolks
- 115g (4oz) butter
- 225g (8oz) white bread, crusts removed and cut into 5mm (1/4in) thick slices
- 2 1/2 tablespoons finely chopped pistachio nuts
- 55g (2oz) mixed dried fruit
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 2 tablespoons icing sugar
- Cardamom and Lime Custard (see page 204)

- ◆ Heat the milk and cream together until boiling. Add the vanilla pod or essence, remove from the heat and allow to cool.

- ◆ Place the sugar and egg yolks in a bowl and whisk until pale and frothy. Strain the milk, if necessary, to remove the vanilla pod and pour it over the yolk mixture, whisking well.
- ◆ Butter a 30 x 23 x 3.5cm (12 x 9 x 1 1/2in) baking tin or oven-proof dish.
- ◆ Butter the slices of bread evenly on both sides and line the base of the buttered dish or tin with a layer of buttered bread.
- ◆ Sprinkle with some of the pistachio nuts, dried fruit and ground cardamom, then pour in about a third of the egg and cream mixture. Continue layering the bread and fruit, adding the custard to moisten each layer, and ending with a layer of buttered bread.
- ◆ Pour any remaining custard over the top layer and leave the pudding to stand for 2-4 hours.
- ◆ Preheat the oven to 200 °C/400 °F/Gas 6. Cover the pudding with foil and stand it in a roasting tin. Pour water into the outer tin to come up to just below the rim of the outer tin.
- ◆ Bake the pudding for 40-45 minutes, until lightly set, puffed up and lightly browned on top.
- ◆ You can use a blow torch for this stage or preheat the grill on the hottest setting. Sift the icing sugar over the pudding. Caramelize the icing sugar with the blow torch or place it under a very hot grill. Take care not to burn the top of the pudding.
- ◆ Serve immediately with the Cardamom and Lime Custard.

