

## “Ask the Industry” - A very merry Christmas!

Syngenta  
05.12.2016



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This month, I’m doing something a little different for those readers that love Christmas pudding as much as I do!

### **Here is my recipe for 8 mini Christmas puddings.**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 100g raisins
- 100g sultanas
- 100g currants
- 75g dried pitted dates, chopped
- 75g mixed peel
- 2 tsp finely grated orange rind
- 1/2 cup (125ml) brandy or dry sherry
- 125g butter, softened
- 1/3 cup (70g) brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups (140g) fresh breadcrumbs (made from day-old bread)

- 1/3 cup (50g) plain flour
- 2 tsp mixed spice
- Plain flour, extra, for cloth

Orange brandy butter:

- 125g soft butter
- 3/4 cup (155g) caster sugar
- 1/3 cup (80ml) brandy or sweet sherry
- 2 tsp finely grated orange rind

### **Method:**

1. Soak the calico in a large bowl overnight.
2. Combine the raisins, sultanas, currants, dates, mixed peel and orange rind in a large glass or ceramic bowl. Place the brandy or sherry in a small saucepan over high heat. Bring to a simmer. Remove from heat and pour over the dried fruit mixture. Stir to combine. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside overnight to soak.
3. Drain the calico well and transfer to a large saucepan of boiling water. Boil for 20 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, use an electric mixer to beat butter and sugar in a small bowl until pale and creamy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well between each addition. Add to the fruit mixture with the breadcrumbs, flour and mixed spice. Use a wooden spoon to stir until well combined.
5. Working with one piece of calico at a time, wearing rubber gloves, remove a piece of calico from the water and wring out excess water. Place flat on a clean work surface. Sprinkle with extra flour and use your hands to spread the flour, leaving a 5cm border, to form a thin but complete layer of flour over the calico. Shape one eighth of the pudding mixture into a ball and place in the centre of the prepared calico. Gather the calico together to enclose filling and tie with kitchen string to seal. Use extra string to create a loop. Repeat with remaining calico, extra flour and pudding mixture.
6. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Lower puddings into the boiling water, making sure there is enough liquid so the puddings are not touching the base of the pan. Cook, covered, over medium heat, adding more water when necessary, for 1½ hours. Remove puddings from the water and serve immediately with brandy butter. Alternatively, hang the puddings immediately in a dry place where they are not touching anything. Loop ends of the calico so they don't rest on the pudding which will prevent it from drying properly. Set aside overnight to dry completely.
7. To make the orange brandy butter, use an electric mixer to beat butter and sugar in a medium bowl until pale and creamy. Add brandy and orange rind and beat until well combined. Serve in a bowl, chilled or at room temperature.

Remember, take some time to relax and enjoy the company of family and friends over the festive season.

From my family to yours, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!