



Steamed Persimmon Pudding

serves 6

- 2 generous tablespoons unsalted butter, softened, plus more for greasing mold
- 1 cup all-purpose flour (I used C4C gluten-free)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg (freshly ground is best)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- 1/8 cup Calvados or other brandy
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 3 Hachiya persimmons, very ripe
- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 3/4 cup organic cane sugar
- 2 medium eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda, dissolved in 2 1/2 teaspoons hot water
- zest of one orange
- 2/3 cup pecans, toasted and coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup finely chopped crystallized ginger
- whipped cream, for serving

Butter a 6-cup pudding mold or heatproof ceramic mixing bowl. Fill a large pot fitted with a steamer insert with enough water to come halfway up mold (test this with an empty mold); set aside. Sift flour, spices and salt in a bowl; set aside. Put Calvados and raisins into a small saucepan and bring to a simmer. Remove from heat; let stand 15 minutes. Drain; discard liquid. Set raisins aside.

Meanwhile, slice tops off persimmons. Scoop out flesh, and press through a sieve into a bowl, discarding skins (you need 1 scant cup persimmon puree). Whisk in milk; set aside.

Put butter and sugar into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment; mix on medium speed until pale and fluffy. Beat in eggs, vanilla and lemon juice. Add persimmon mixture in 2 batches, scraping down sides of bowl after each addition. Mix in baking soda mixture. Beat in flour mixture until just combined. Stir in orange zest, pecans, raisins and ginger. Pour into prepared mold; cover with buttered parchment paper and lid. If using a ceramic bowl, cover tightly with buttered parchment paper then with foil.

Bring water in prepared pot to a boil, then reduce heat to reach a simmer. Carefully lower mold into steamer. Cover pot and steam until a cake tester inserted in center comes out clean, 3 to 3 1/2 hours. Check occasionally to make sure water level is maintained, and add hot water as needed.

Transfer mold to a wire rack. Immediately remove lid and parchment (being careful of emerging steam). Cool for 15 minutes, then gently unmold pudding onto a plate. Serve cut into slices, garnished with whipped cream, that has been spiked with a little Calvados (or not).