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One of our favorite winter recipes:



Twice-Baked Persimmon Pudding

Persimmons are a late-fall fruit that looks like a tomato with a large stem. You'll usually find larger, redder Asian persimmons in the supermarket. If you live in the Great Lakes region, you may be able to find wild native persimmons at local markets. Persimmon pudding is a traditional American dessert, but it can be made with another variety of fruit.

Asian persimmons are loaded with bitter, astringent tannins until they are completely, fully ripe—the fruit should look nearly translucent and be pulpy-soft to the touch before use. Once they are ripe, they are sticky sweet. (American persimmons are sweet while still firm.)

Ingredients

2-3 ripe Asian persimmons, or 3-4 American persimmons	
1 egg + 1 egg yolk	1 1/4 cups flour
1/4 cup white sugar	1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 cup light brown sugar	1/2 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 cup milk	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons brandy or whisky (optional)	1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
4 tablespoons butter, melted	1/2 heaping teaspoon cinnamon

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° and grease a small casserole dish.
2. Slice the top off the persimmons and scoop the pulp out of the skin with a spoon. Blend or food-process the pulp until it is smooth. You should end up with about 1 cup of pulp.
3. Using a mixer, blend the pulp with the egg, egg yolk, milk, both sugars, and the liquor until smooth and completely mixed.
4. In a smaller bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, & spices.
5. When the oven is ready, add the melted butter to the wet ingredients and stir until combined. Add the dry ingredients to the wet, about 1/2 a cup at a time, and fold in until just moistened. Pour the batter into the dish and bake for about 50 minutes to 1 hour, or until a cake tester/toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.
6. Remove the pudding from the oven, but raise the temperature of the oven to 375°. The pudding should quickly collapse down to about half the size. Return the pudding to the oven for about 15 more minutes, testing the edges and the crust periodically until they become chewy or crispy, depending on your preference. Serve warm with whipped cream or hard sauce.

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