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COMMENT

Rice pudding is comfort food goodness

By Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner

whatscooking@theifp.ca



**What's
Cookin'**

Rice pudding and I go way back. I remember my grandma Kentner serving rice pudding, which by the way is the only way I ever remember her serving rice—I think grandpa was more a potato man.

Anyhow, grandma, and then my mom—once grandma parted with the recipe—made a baked version of rice pudding. You cooked the rice, then added raisins, sugar, milk, eggs, vanilla, cinnamon and there was a special crock type dish that it baked in. Once complete, the rice was soft and sweet, the raisins were juicy and plump and the eggs lent a richness to it. It still is one of my favorite comfort-food desserts and brings back fond memories.

This stove-top version of rice pudding was introduced to me by a colleague. The first time I made it, I was a bit shocked by the amount of liquid and thought for sure I had written something down wrong. I also thought it was a bit of

a pain, because you do have to make it on the stovetop and keep an eye on it—stirring regularly—whereas my grandma's version was so simple, minding its own business in the oven while you carried about doing other things. But no, this stove-top version is a bit of an attention seeker.

Anyhow, I had my reservations about this version. Until I tasted it. WOW! I've never had rice pudding that was creamy like this one before. And the brandy, apricots, cardamom—all bringing flavours to the dish that I'd never contemplated. I strongly recommend you give this a whirl. It's kind of a cold-weather dish (but since I was still shoveling snow on April 10—who knows, this could be very seasonal)! Have fun and keep cooking!

Email questions and comments to
whatscooking@theifp.ca

World's Best Rice Pudding

Serves 8

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup brandy
- 3/4 cup dried apricots or mangoes, chopped
- 1 cup long grain white rice (not parboiled)
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 and 1/2 cups whole milk
- 2 and 1/2 cups 10% cream
- 2/3 cup white sugar
- 1/2 vanilla bean (split lengthwise)
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cardamom

METHOD

1. Warm brandy in a small pot. Add dried fruit. Let sit for at least one hour.
2. Bring two cups water to a boil in a large pot. Add salt and rice. Cover and simmer over low heat, stirring once or twice during cooking—approximately 15 minutes.
3. Add milk, cream, sugar and vanilla



bean. Mix well.

4. Continue to cook, uncovered, stirring frequently approximately 30 minutes.

5. As mixture thickens, reduce to low and continue cooking for another 10-15 minutes until most liquid has been absorbed and pudding is thick. Remove from heat.

6. Remove vanilla bean. Drain apricots and add apricots to pudding.

7. Add spices. Mix well.

8. Allow to cool slightly and serve at room temperature.



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