

Pinza Di Pane Bread Pudding

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Adios! Plain old bread + butter pudding - I've been upsold thanks Emiko Davies

250-300g stale bread (about half a large country-style loaf) (I used brioche)

500-750ml (2-3 cups) warm full-cream milk

150g (1 cup) sultanas

60ml (¼ cup) grappa, rum or white wine - I used marsala is that ok? Tasted great!

2 eggs

80g (1 cup) sugar

60g (¼ cup) butter, melted, plus extra for greasing

1 teaspoon fennel seeds, crushed slightly in a mortar and pestle

Zest of 1 orange

Zest of 1 lemon

150g (1 cup) dried figs, roughly chopped

Icing sugar, for dusting

Tear or cut up the bread (whether you leave crusts on or off is up to you, but you should end up with a total of about 250-300g). Let the bread soak in 500ml of the warm milk until you can easily crumble or mash it - add more milk if needed, or leave overnight. Preheat the oven to 180C (160C fan). While the bread is soaking, place the sultanas in a bowl to steep in the grappa. If not using alcohol, simply use water. Stir the bread with its leftover milk with a wooden spoon (it should break up easily) until you have a dense, crumbly sort of batter. In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs and sugar together with the butter. Add the fennel seeds and zests and then, with a spoon or spatula, fold in the bread mixture until it is creamy and well combined. Add the sultanas (with their grappa, or marsala, or whatever you choose to use) and the chopped figs and combine. Grease a baking tin with butter and line with baking paper or dust with flour (use whatever tin you have - a round springform cake tin about 22-25cm diameter or a 23cm square tin, like a brownie tin). Bake for 35-45 minutes, or until the pudding is golden brown and set. It should feel firm on top. Serve warm or cold, dusted with icing sugar before serving, if you wish. The pudding will keep in the fridge for up to 3 days. Serves 10

I am making this again asap - I am going to try it with walnuts + also some brandied cumquats I have in the fridge)

