

## Sticky Date, Maple and Walnut Pudding with Caramel Custard

1 ½ cups chopped dates  
1 tsp vanilla essence  
1 tsp baking soda  
½ cup soft brown sugar (firmly packed)  
1 cup SR flour, sifted  
½ cup wholemeal flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 apple grated  
1/3 cup chopped walnuts  
1/3 cup canola oil  
¼ cup milk  
2 eggs

### **Topping:**

¼ cup maple syrup

### **Caramel Custard:**

1/3 cup sugar  
2 cups (500 mls) trim milk  
2 Tbsp custard powder

Place dates with 1 ½ cups (375ml) water in a saucepan. Bring to the boil then reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes or until soft. Stir in vanilla and baking soda and then set aside to cool to room temperature. Puree.

Place sugar, flours, baking powder, grated apple and walnuts in a bowl. Mix oil, milk and eggs together and add to flour mixture along with pureed dates; mix until blended (do not overmix as this will toughen the pudding). Pour the batter into a lightly oiled 20cm round springform tin; bake at 180C for around 35 - 40 minutes or until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 10 –15 minutes before turning out. Turn onto serving plate, and while still warm, pour ¼ cup maple syrup over the top. Serve with warm caramel custard

### **Caramel custard:**

Add sugar to heavy bottomed saucepan. Heat on medium heat until sugar is melted and caramel in colour. Add milk (sugar will crackle a bit at this stage) and stir over heat until caramel dissolves. Mix custard powder to a smooth paste with some extra milk, stir into hot caramel milk and bring to boil, stirring all the time. Turn heat off and continue stirring for a minute or so until custard is thickened.

### **Health Habits:**

- Including fruit purees and/or grated fruit – this means you can use less fat and less sugar. It also adds more fibre
- Replacing some white flour with wholemeal flour – adds more fibre
- Adding walnuts – a good source of omega 3 fatty acids
- Using a healthy oil eg canola oil instead of butter
- Serving pudding with low fat custard rather than cream / rich buttery sauce