

DAVID LEBOVITZ

Warm Lemon Pudding

Four servings

Adapted from Ballymaloe Desserts by JR Ryall

This is a pretty forgiving recipe. I dialed down the sugar a bit and if you don't have salted butter on hand, just add a pinch of salt to the butter and sugar at the beginning of the recipe.

You don't need an electric mixer to make this (although you are welcome to use one), but if making it by hand and you have only one whisk, clean it (and dry it) extremely well between uses as any trace of fat in the egg whites will prevent them from whipping properly.

3/4 cup (150g), plus 2 tablespoons (30g) of sugar

1 tablespoon (15g) salted butter, at room temperature

2 lemons, for the zest and to get 1/2 cup (125ml) freshly squeezed lemon juice (depending on the size of your lemons, you may need an extra lemon to get enough juice)

3 large or extra-large eggs, separated (put the egg whites in a medium-size metal bowl)

1 cup (250ml) whole milk

3 tablespoons (30g) all-purpose flour

Powdered sugar, for finishing

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Have a baking dish or ovenproof pie plate with a 5 cup (1,2L) capacity ready.

Put the 3/4 cup (150g) of sugar and the butter in a medium-size metal bowl. Zest the 2 lemons right into the bowl. Use a flexible silicone spatula or a spoon to break up and mash in the butter so it's evenly dispersed in the sugar and there are no large visible pieces of butter; it'll look like damp sand.

Whisk in half the milk, then whisk in the egg yolks and the flour, then the lemon juice. Finally, whisk in the rest of the milk.

Whisk the egg whites that are in the metal bowl until they form soft peaks. Continue whipping while sprinkling in the remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar, whipping until the mixture forms stiff, but still glossy (not dry), peaks.

Scrape the egg whites over the lemon base, then fold in the whites with a spatula just until they're incorporated. The mixture will still be quite liquidy.

Pour the mixture into the baking dish and bake for 35-40 minutes, until the pudding feels set in the middle.

Remove from the oven and let cool at least 5 to 10 minutes before serving. It's *very* hot right out of the oven, so let it sit a little before digging in.

Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve.

Serving: I served this with wild blueberries (that were frozen), which I cooked with a sprinkle of sugar and a little squeeze of lemon juice in a small covered saucepan until the berries were warmed through and the juices were syrupy. If you cook them a day or two in advance, the juices will thicken even further.

JR likes to serve it with whipped cream, which I didn't do, but it would be delicious with that, or with berries tossed in sugar, in the summer. A scoop of berry or blackcurrant sorbet would be another excellent accompaniment.

While the pudding is very good warm, we enjoyed leftovers at room temperature.