

Christmas mini-series

Feasting on the finest food for Christmas Day

Episode Description

The final episode in our Christmas mini-series. In this episode, Sarah is joined by Arthur, and her husband, the writer, Adam Nicholson, to discuss one of the most important parts of Christmas – the food! Packed with inspiration to create a lovely Christmas lunch and some delectable edible treats too.

In this episode, discover...

- ❖ Some of Sarah's best-ever Christmas recipes
- ❖ Adam's top picks for a festive feast

Mini-series episode 4 advice sheet

Mince pies with orange pastry recipe

I love an orange flavoured pastry with my mince pies, a traditional tasting twist on a classic recipe. Makes 15-20 mince pies:

For pastry:

- ❖ 75g butter, plus little more for tray
- ❖ 170g plain flour, plus more for dusting
- ❖ 50g icing sugar
- ❖ Grated zest and juice 1 orange

For mincemeat:

- ❖ 80g fresh cobnuts (If using hazelnuts or almonds, soak overnight in water)
- ❖ 100g cranberries or ready-soaked pitted prunes
- ❖ 50g Demerara sugar
- ❖ 50g raisins
- ❖ 75g currants
- ❖ 75g vegetarian suet
- ❖ Juice of 1 lemon
- ❖ 1 apple, peeled, cored and diced
- ❖ A slug of sloe gin (or brandy)

Simply mix all ingredients together in a bowl, ladle into sterilised jar and keep somewhere cool.

Method:

- ❖ Mix all the ingredients together by hand (or in a processor). It's quite a wet sticky mix, but don't worry. Mould it into a ball and put it in the fridge for 30 mins.
- ❖ Flour your work surface and roll out the pastry. Using a cutter, make rounds slightly bigger than you need to fill the dimples in your pie tin. Line the pie tin slots.
- ❖ Put dessert spoon of mincemeat in each. I love it with a teaspoon of cream cheese or Creme fraiche, slightly sweetened, on top. You can freeze the pies in the tin at this stage or bake.
- ❖ Cut some stars out from the pastry too. Wet your fingers with water and slightly dampen the edge of each base before putting the stars on top. Lightly brush with a little egg wash.
- ❖ They can be cooked from frozen but add 5 min to cooking time.
- ❖ Preheat oven to 180°C. Bake in the oven for 15 minutes. You can cool and freeze at this cooked stage too, but take care not to dry them out. Only reheat once.
- ❖ Allow them to cool in the tin for a few minutes before moving to a cake rack to cool more. Serve warm, dusting with icing sugar, or store in airtight tin for up to month.

Mini blinis with smoked salmon or roe recipe

Not to be confused with the peach cocktails made famous in Venice - these mini pancakes are super easy and fun to make. Makes 80 blinis:

for the blinis

- ❖ 225g plain flour
- ❖ 225g buckwheat flour, sifted
- ❖ 4 teaspoons dried yeast
- ❖ 2 tablespoons caster sugar
- ❖ ½ teaspoon salt
- ❖ 650ml milk
- ❖ 110g butter
- ❖ 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- ❖ Sunflower oil, mixed with a little butter

for the topping

- ❖ 200ml crème fraîche
- ❖ 1kg roe, gravadlax, or any smoked fish
- ❖ Bunch of fresh dill

Method:

- ❖ Combine the flours, yeast, sugar and salt in a large bowl. In a saucepan, heat the milk and butter to blood heat, making sure that the butter melts completely. Stir this mixture into the flours and mix well.
- ❖ Stir in the beaten eggs and whisk until smooth. Cover the bowl and leave to rise in a warm place for 1-1½ hours, until light and bubbly.
- ❖ Brush a heavy-based frying pan with oil and when warmed through, drop half a tablespoon of the mixture onto it. When small holes begin to appear in the surface, turn and lightly cook the other side. Keep warm.
- ❖ If you have pre-prepared (or frozen) the blinis, warm them wrapped in a damp napkin, in a medium oven for 10 minutes.
- ❖ To serve, top the blinis with the crème fraîche and roe, gravadlax or smoked fish and put a sprig of dill on each.

This recipe features on p.133 of Sarah Raven's Complete Christmas cookbook.

Coffee, meringue and ice cream cake

I was first given this incredible pudding by a friend, Tam Lawson, 20 years ago and I've made it for pretty much every Christmas since. I've never across anyone (apart from those who are non-dairy) who has not devoured it! Serves 8-10:

- ❖ 2 tbsp of strong instant coffee
- ❖ 1 tbsp boiling water
- ❖ 750ml double cream
- ❖ 1 tbsp caster sugar
- ❖ 1 tbsp coffee liqueur
- ❖ 3 pieces of thinly sliced stem ginger
- ❖ 1 tbsp ginger syrup

- ❖ Frozen raspberries or rosehip syrup to serve

For the meringues:

- ❖ 6 egg whites
- ❖ 180g granulated sugar
- ❖ 180g caster sugar
- ❖ sunflower oil

Method:

- ❖ To make the meringues, whisk 6 egg whites till they're very stiff and dry.
- ❖ Slowly add (bit by bit) 180g granulated sugar, whizz that in until the egg whites regain their former stiffness. Then fold in 180g caster sugar with a large metal spoon.
- ❖ In serving spoon sized dollops, spoon on to greaseproof paper, rubbed with a trace of sunflower oil.
- ❖ Preheat the oven to 110°C (gas mark 1/4 or lowest setting). Bake for about 3 hours until crisp. Once cooked you can just turn off the oven and leave overnight.
- ❖ Mix 2 tbsp instant coffee in 1 tbsp boiling water and leave to chill. Whip 750ml double cream to soft peak stage and add 1 tbsp caster sugar and 1 tbsp Kahlua (coffee liqueur) and half the coffee liquid.
- ❖ Break the meringue into pieces. Fold the meringue and cream together, and add 3 pieces of stem ginger, thinly sliced with 1 tbsp of ginger syrup.
- ❖ Spoon into a deep (8cm x 22cm) straight-sided round cake tin, lined with non-stick paper.
- ❖ Marble the top with the remaining coffee liquid. And freeze for at least 24 hours.
- ❖ Serve straight from the freezer with plenty of pomegranate seeds or raspberries over the top.

This recipe features Sarah Raven's Garden Cookbook and Complete Christmas.