

Sticky Toffee Pudding

Soda-bloomed dates. Dark muscovado & black treacle. Whisky caramel finished off-heat.

Yield: **9 portions** (8" square) Active: **15 min** Total: **1 hr 15 min** Oven: **170°C** (340°F) Done: **94°C** internal

INGREDIENTS

METRIC · US VOLUME IN RIGHT COLUMN

DATE BASE

Medjool dates, pitted	220g	~1¼ cups
Boiling water	280g	1¼ cups
Baking soda (<i>stir into hot water</i>)	6g	1 tsp

CAKE

Unsalted butter, soft	100g	7 tbsp
Dark muscovado (<i>non-negotiable</i>)	175g	scant 1 cup
Black treacle / molasses	25g	1 tbsp
Egg, whole (<i>RT</i>)	100g	2 large
Vanilla extract	5g	1 tsp
All-purpose flour	175g	1½ cups
Baking powder	4g	1 tsp
Diamond kosher salt	3g	¾ tsp

WHISKY CARAMEL SAUCE

Dark muscovado	150g	¾ cup
Unsalted butter, cubed	100g	7 tbsp
Heavy cream 35%+	200g	scant 1 cup
Vanilla extract	5g	1 tsp
Dark whisky / rum	30g	2 tbsp
Flaky sea salt	3g	½ tsp

Kit: 20x20 cm (8") square pan or 8 ramekins (8oz) · heavy small saucepan · scale · thermometer · whisk · skewer

METHOD

- Bloom dates.** Pit and halve dates. Stir **6g soda** into **280g boiling water**, pour over dates. It foams. Stand **15 min**. Blend smooth. Cool to $\leq 40^{\circ}\text{C}$.
Soda raises pH from 5 to 8 → cell walls + fiber dissolve, fruit goes silky. Pre-reacts acid before flour. — McGee 2004
- Preheat 170°C** (340°F). Butter + line 8" pan with parchment sling. Whisk dry: flour, baking powder, salt.
- Cream butter + muscovado + treacle.** 3–4 min until pale and aerated. Slight graininess fine.
Muscovado = 15% molasses (vs 6% in light brown). Invert sugars keep crumb moist; molasses re-acidifies for residual lift. — Parks 2017
- Eggs one at a time + vanilla.** Scrape between each.
- Fold in flour and dates** in alternation: half flour → all date purée → remaining flour. **8–10 strokes max**. Stop at 80% incorporated — flour streaks fine.
Hot purée → melted butter → gummy crumb. Cool to 40°C. Overmixing develops gluten = tough.
- Bake 170°C, 30–35 min.** Tap pan once after pouring to release air pockets.

Done: Internal **94°C** (200°F). Skewer tacky with crumbs, not wet. Top matte and slightly cracked.

Rest: 10 min in pan. Do not unmould. Skewer all over (30+ holes) before saucing.

Sauce — make while pudding bakes

- Butter + muscovado, low heat, stir until dissolved — 3–4 min.
- Off heat: cream + vanilla, whisk smooth. Return low heat, simmer 90 sec.
- Off heat:** whisky + flaky salt. Hold 70–80°C. *Whisky on heat → aromatics boil off >78°C. — Modernist Cuisine*
- Service:** Pour 1/3 over warm pudding (60 sec absorb) → slice → drench 40g hot sauce per portion → cold cream.

ELEVATION

TIER 1 — NO EXTRA TIME

- Silan glaze** — replace treacle with date molasses
- PX sherry** instead of whisky — raisin/fig notes mirror date
- Espresso compensator** — 1g instant if skipping booze

TIER 2 — WORTH IT (+10 MIN)

- Brown butter cake** — brown 130g, weigh 100g
- Burnt honey sauce** — caramelize 30g honey, whisk in
- Miso caramel** — 15g shiro miso into finished sauce

TIER 3 — RESTAURANT

- Smoked dates** — cold-smoke 20 min over oak
- Smoked clotted cream** — 15 min hay/applewood
- Bone marrow crust** — 20g rendered marrow + flaky salt brushed on top

TROUBLESHOOT

Metallic taste	Soda not dissolved. Stir to clear before pour.
Dense, gummy	Date purée too hot. Cool to 40°C.
Sunk middle	Underbaked. Hit 94°C internal.
Sauce split	Off heat, splash cold cream, whisk hard.
Sauce too thick cooled	Whisk in 1 tbsp warm cream / 100g sauce.
Cake tastes flat	Light brown sugar → muscovado, or +25g molasses.

CHARTER PREP & STORAGE

Store separately	Pudding + sauce in 2 containers. Always.
Pudding	3 d RT · 1 wk fridge · 2 mo freezer
Sauce	2 wk fridge · 3 mo freezer (skim fat layer)
Reheat	120°C / 12 min, lightly pre-soaked. Sauce: 30s microwave bursts.
Date base	Bloomed: 5 d fridge. Double batch = next week.
Ramekins (raw)	Freeze 1 mo. Bake from frozen +10 min @ 165°C.
Scaling	x1.5 = 9x13", 35–40 min. Sauce linear.