

STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING CAKE

Serves 8-10

200g pitted medjool dates, chopped
235ml strong coffee
125g butter, plus extra for greasing the tin
250g self-raising flour, plus extra for flouring the tin
200g dark muscovado sugar
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
1 tbsp golden syrup
1 tbsp treacle
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
70g walnuts or pecans, roughly chopped, to decorate

For the toffee glaze

100ml double cream
70g soft light-brown sugar
25g butter
1 tbsp golden syrup
2 tsp treacle

Put the dates and the coffee into a saucepan. Bring to the boil then take off the heat. Leave for 30 minutes. Butter and flour a deep 22-23cm cake tin and tip out the excess flour. Heat the oven to 180C/170C fan/gas mark 4.

Beat the sugar and butter and for the cake until fluffy. Add the eggs a little at a time, beating well, then add the golden syrup, treacle and vanilla extract. Fold in the self-raising flour and the bicarbonate of soda, then add the dates and their soaking liquid. Scrape the batter into the tin and bake for 50 minutes. A skewer inserted into the middle of the cake should come out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 15 minutes, then turn it out on to a wire rack to cool completely.

Meanwhile, put all the glaze ingredients into a saucepan and, stirring, bring to the boil. Turn the heat down and simmer for 8 minutes. Pour this into a bowl, put a piece of greaseproof paper on the surface of the glaze – to stop it developing a skin – and leave to cool completely. It will thicken considerably.

Spread the glaze on top of the cake – it doesn't matter if it runs down the sides a bit – and scatter over the nuts. Serve with pouring cream or crème fraîche.