



Raw Christmas pudding balls

Enjoy them plain as mini cakes, or top them to make tiny puddings – either way, these raw treats pack a punch of festive season flavour.

Ingredients

- 8 medjool dates
- 8 moist dried figs (hard stem tip removed)
- 1 cup raw almonds
- Zest of one orange
- 1/3-1/2 cup currants
- 1/3 cup roughly chopped pecan nuts
- 1 teaspoon fresh mixed spice (my blend is cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg & cloves). Fresh spices are essential for this recipe's Christmas flavours.

Topping/decoration (optional)

- Organic white chocolate or yoghurt buds, melted
- (OR edible raw cacao butter, melted. Scrape vanilla from 1/2 vanilla pod & mix through)
- Dried cranberries

Recipe by
Sandra Villella
Jean Hailes
Naturopath



⌚ Prep time: 10 minutes (15-20 minutes if adding a topping) 🍴 Makes 15-20
Gluten free, vegetarian (vegan/dairy free, depending on topping choice)

Method

In a food processor, chop almonds to a coarse meal. Add dates, figs, orange zest and mixed spice, process until mixture forms a mass/ball.

Remove mixture from food processor, mix through pecans and currants with your hands. Roll heaped teaspoons of mixture into bite-sized balls. Refrigerate until firm (10-15 mins).

Once firm, decorate the balls like tiny Christmas puddings by dipping them into the melted white chocolate/ yoghurt buds or spread topping on with a teaspoon. Top with a dried cranberry.



Nutritional information

I love my Mum's Christmas pudding, but am always too full to enjoy it after Christmas lunch. However, I still like to have something sweet. So here are many of the ingredients of a typical Christmas cake or pudding, blended together to create a raw mouthful of Christmas sweetness, without additional sugar, flour or eggs (or suet of the puddings of old!).

Rather than the whole dried fruits typically found in a Christmas cake/pudding, the dates and figs in this recipe are blended to form the base, while the currants remain whole to help create the visual of a Christmas cake. Dried fruit is high in fibre, the figs provide some calcium and, although dates and figs are high GI*, currants are low.

The nuts help to moderate the natural sugars found in dried fruit and lower the overall GI of the recipe. The almonds are also blended to help form the base, while the delicious pecans (both my sisters use pecans in their Christmas cakes) remain in chunks for texture.

Rather than the mixed peel often found in traditional Christmas cakes, orange zest is used instead, helping to create a bit of the 'brandy' taste often found in these recipes. The aromatic spices are traditionally used to ease digestion, which makes this recipe perfect to enjoy after a rich meal (even better with a peppermint tea).

So, there's no need to prepare the calico or boil the pudding for hours on a hot day. These balls are very easy to prepare, full of whole foods and the perfect end to a Christmas lunch, or to brighten a plate at your Christmas function.

*GI – Glycaemic Index – is a measure of how a carbohydrate food affects your blood glucose level. Low GI foods produce gradual rises in blood glucose levels, as they are more slowly digested and absorbed than higher GI foods. Low GI diets help in the management of diabetes.