

Fig Dishes



By BETTY M. JOHNSTON,
Field Officer in Rural Sociology, Department
of Agriculture, Wellington

MOST people think of figs as rather sticky, brown objects that come suitably enclosed in small boxes from the Middle East. Few realise that fig trees flourish in the warmer parts of New Zealand, bearing crops of dark, bronze-green fruit which the gourmet rates as a delicacy. The flavour of fresh figs is quite unlike that of the dried fruit and though it may not please everyone, those who have acquired a taste for it are loud in its praises. In this article recipes are given for both fresh and dried figs. Naturally the colour and flavour are better when fresh fruit is used.

Cold Desserts

Fig Bavarian Cream

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of chopped figs	Pinch of salt
$1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of gelatine	12 fl. oz. of scalded milk
4 fl. oz. of cold milk	1 teaspoon of vanilla
3 egg yolks	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint of whipped cream
4oz. of sugar	

(Serves 6)

Soak the gelatine in the cold milk for 5 minutes. Beat the sugar, yolks, and salt together until they are light. Add the scalded milk and mix all the ingredients thoroughly. Cook the mixture in a double boiler or over hot water, stirring it constantly until it coats a metal spoon. Add the gelatine and stir it into the mixture until it has dissolved. Fold $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of chopped figs into the Bavarian cream and when it is cool fold in the whipped cream. Pour the cream into a mould which has been dipped in cold water and chill it until it is firm.

Fresh Fig Whip

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup of mashed stewed figs	12 fl. oz. of hot fruit juice
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of gelatine	3oz. of sugar
6 fl. oz. of cold water	$1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of lemon juice
3 egg whites	

(Serves 6)

Cook the fresh fruit until it is soft, and then mash it. Soak the gelatine in the cold water for 5 minutes. Add the hot fruit juice and half the sugar to the gelatine and stir the mixture until it has dissolved. Next add the lemon juice and leave the mixture to cool. When it is beginning to set add the fruit pulp and beat the mixture until it is frothy. Beat the egg whites to a soft foam, add the remaining sugar, and beat the egg-sugar mixture until it is stiff. Fold it into the gelatine mixture. Serve the whip either in individual dishes or pour it into a cold, wet mould. Serve cream

or a custard made with the egg yolks with the whip.

Hot Desserts

Fig Pie

2 well-beaten eggs	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt
2 tablespoons of sugar	1 baked pastry shell
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of stewed dried figs	2 egg whites
	2 tablespoons of sugar

Combine the eggs, salt, sugar, and cooked figs in the top of a double boiler. Cook them slowly until the egg thickens (stir constantly). Pour the filling into the pie shell and top it with a meringue mixture made by beating two egg whites with 2 level tablespoons of sugar. Brown the meringue in a moderate oven (350 degrees F.) for 10 to 12 minutes.

Figs Annette

$2\frac{1}{2}$ cups of stewed figs	Dash of cinnamon
2oz. of sugar	3 tablespoons of lemon juice
1 tablespoon of cornflour	1 teaspoon of grated lemon rind
1 tablespoon of butter	Sliced sponge cake or shortcake
Pinch of salt	
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of nutmeg	

(Serves 6)

Drain the figs. Add the sugar to the fig syrup and bring it to the boil.