

Corning Healthcare District

ELDER SERVICES

Newsletter

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BRING US SOME FIGGY PUDDING

The word "pudding" in England is used to describe an after-meal dessert. Figgy pudding is a time-honored holiday treat made famous by a popular Christmas song. It is similar to fruitcake, but the traditional recipe calls for suet, which is not often readily available. This recipe for fig muffins is healthier and easier to make.

WHOLE WHEAT FIG MUFFINS

1 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup wheat germ or wheat bran*
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup honey
1 egg
1/2 cup milk
2 teaspoons grated lemon or orange peel
1 cup dried figs, coarsely chopped



Preheat oven to 375°F. Stir together flours, wheat germ, baking powder and salt; set aside. Cream together butter and honey; beat in egg. Stir in milk, lemon peel and figs. Add to dry ingredients and mix just enough to blend. Evenly distribute batter among 12 greased muffin cups. Bake about 20 minutes or until muffins are lightly browned and test done. Carefully remove muffins from pan and serve warm.

Variation 1: leave out lemon / orange peel and add 1 tablespoon aniseed.

*Wheat bran contains more carbohydrates and fiber than wheat germ.



The National Institute on Aging notes that in addition to our genes, a number of other factors influence how we age. Exercise, a good night's sleep, a healthy diet, reduced stress, and staying connected to others are just some of the factors that contribute to aging successfully. Read more at:

https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-do-we-know-about-healthy-aging?utm_source=nia-eblast&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=healthyaging-20221114



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Corning

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Bringing Health Services to Southern Tehama County

FUN FACTS ABOUT FIGS

Cooked figs have been used throughout history as a sweetener in lieu of sugar, and some cuisines still maintain this practice today. You can use fresh or dried figs in jams, jellies, desserts, even savory dishes. In addition to natural sweetness, figs provide iron, fiber, and antioxidants. They have anti-inflammatory properties and they are a good source of magnesium, and potassium, and calcium. Figs are a high glycemic food, with a glycemic index of 61. Dried figs contain more sugar than fresh ones. Both fresh and dried figs contain a high level of vitamin K. People taking blood-thinning medications such as warfarin need to keep the vitamin K levels in their diet consistent, so they may wish to avoid figs. Figs may cause allergic reactions in those who are sensitive to latex or birch pollen. If in doubt, consult your healthcare provider.

Figs are the fruit of the *Ficus carica* plant. There are over 700 named varieties of fig trees. All of the varieties fall into four fig types:

- **Caprifigs** – Caprifigs only produce male flowers and never bear fruit. Their only purpose is to pollinate female fig trees.
- **Smyrna** – Smyrna figs bear all female flowers. They have to be pollinated by a Caprifig.
- **San Pedro** – San Pedro figs bear two crops: one on leafless mature wood that requires no pollination and one on new wood that requires pollination by a male flower.
- **Common figs** – Common figs are the type usually grown in home landscapes. Some types of figs require another tree or pollination by a wasp. Figs that require pollination have an opening that allows the pollinating wasps entry to the internal flowers. Common figs do not need another tree or wasps. They are 100% vegan and because they don't need an opening, they are less susceptible to rot caused by insects and rainwater entering the fruit.

Some popular types of edible figs include:

- **Celeste** - Celeste is a small to medium sized brown or purple fig that grows on a fairly large tree. It produces dessert quality fruit that ripens earlier than most other figs.
- **Alma figs** - These aren't much to look at but the fruit has excellent, rich flavor. It ripens late in the season.
- **Brown Turkey** - Brown Turkey produces a crop of large, tasty figs over a long season. The fruit has attractive flesh and few seeds.
- **Purple Genca** - Also called **Black Genoa** or **Black Spanish**, is a large, deep purple variety with sweet, red flesh.
- **Kadota** – These trees grow big, up to 30 feet and the yellow-green skin figs have purple seedless pulp.
- **Mission** – Mission Fig is the most popular variety planted in California. It can be trimmed and kept small, even grows well in a container. The fruit has a purplish-black skin and strawberry-colored pulp.

Originating from the *Ficus* genus, fig trees were known to be first cultivated in the Eastern Mediterranean and parts of Western Asia almost 5,000 years back. Fig trees belong to a unique tree species that usually produces around two to three fruit crops a year. Fig trees are completely drought tolerant and can grow very large. Fig trees can grow anywhere from 15 to 30 feet tall, and although they do not have any specific care requirements, they should be pruned from time to time. They can be cultivated in containers but they will need regular pruning to restrict their height.



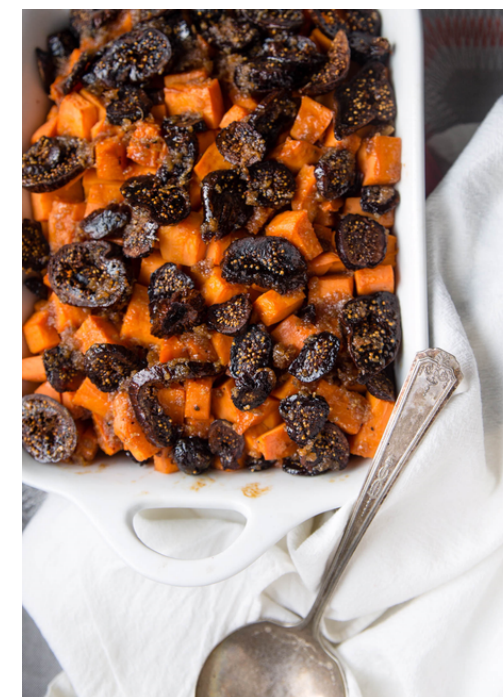
Instructions

Heat oven to 375° Peel yams and cut into 1/2-inch thick slices. In large saucepan fitted with a steamer basket, bring 2 inches of water to a boil. Add yams and cover. Cook until just tender when pierced with a knife, about 8 minutes. In shallow, greased 1 or 1 1/2-quart baking dish, arrange yams, slightly overlapping, and top with figs. (Recipe can be made one day in advance up to this point.)

Melt butter in small saucepan over low heat. Stir in ginger and heat about 1 minute. Add brown sugar and stir until dissolved; add lemon juice, salt and pepper. Pour mixture evenly over yams and figs and bake until the yams are lightly glazed on top, about 15 minutes.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds yams about 3 medium
- 1 cup thinly sliced Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs 4 oz.
- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated fresh gingerroot or 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper



Recipe and photos feature Sun-Maid and Orchard Choice California Dried Figs. Recipe provided with permission by Valley Fig Growers.

Photo by Annelies Zijderveld

- The Corning Healthcare District (CHD) Elder Services Program provides health and wellness education, workshops on cooking and nutrition, Medicare counseling through HICAP, Diabetes support, and information on a wide variety of issues relevant to seniors, including Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's, caregiving, falls prevention, personal and home safety, emergency preparedness, depression and mental health, suicide prevention, and end of life planning.* We have assisted seniors with incontinence supplies, walkers, emergency food, and much more.
- CHD Elder Services also distributes the File of Life refrigerator magnet and personal-size cards free of charge to community members age 50 and over.
- *Disclaimer: Elaine Benwell is not a medical professional. She provides information and support only. She does not diagnose, treat, prescribe, or give medical advice.