

Rice pudding

Risgrynsgröt



Risgrynsgröt is really three words joined together which, if literally translated, mean 'rice grain's porridge'. So is it a porridge or a pudding? To my mind it is definitely a pudding if it is served after as a dessert and a porridge if it is served in the morning. However many people prefer to call it a porridge whenever it is served.

Rice porridge/pudding has been an important dish in Sweden for centuries. The first record of rice porridge being served in Sweden was in 1328, at the funeral wake for the father of St. Bridget of Sweden. In the 1700s, rice porridge/pudding was considered to be fashionable and was served at all the finest parties.

Rice pudding can be served at any time of year, but it is nearly always included as part of a *julbord* (Christmas buffet). It is normally dusted with cinnamon with an almond is hidden in the pudding. Whoever gets the almond gets a task, like composing thanks in rhyme for the meal. In the old days, if a single young man or woman found the almond, it was a sign that the coming year would bring true love.

Finally it is important to put a dish of *risgrynsgröt* outside the front door for the Christmas elf, because otherwise he will get annoyed and cause mischief. In some families the *risgrynsgröt* should be put out before dawn on Christmas Eve, but others leave it until the evening.

Tips

- Take care in stage 3 as the pudding will burn very easily.
- This recipe is based on a traditional Swedish recipe which was for 4 people, but I think it could easily serve 8.
- A creamy cold version, called *Ris à la Malta*, is served with a fruit sauce and is perhaps even more popular.

Ingredients

5 oz.	pudding (short-grain) rice
1 ¼ cups	water
½ tsp	salt
3 cups	milk
1	cinnamon stick
1½ tbsp	superfine sugar
1 tbsp.	butter
	ground cinnamon for dusting

Method

1. Put the rice, water and salt in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
2. Add the milk and cinnamon stick. Mix well and heat until the mixture is hot, but don't let it boil.
3. Cover again and leave the pudding on a very low heat until the rice has absorbed all the milk. This will normally take between 30 and 45 minutes. Don't stir the rice and keep it covered as much as possible.
4. Once the milk has been absorbed, remove from the heat and leave covered for another 10 minutes. Then stir in the sugar and butter.
5. Serve lukewarm dusted with ground cinnamon. At Christmas, hide an almond in the pudding before serving.