

# Luke Mangan

This Aussie chef and international restaurateur shares his elegant take on trifle. Give the Christmas pudding a pass and dip into these cool layers of rhubarb jelly, custard and sherry-soaked sponge.





## RHUBARB AND SHERRY TRIFLES

These trifles involve several processes, but they're worth the effort and make a lavish dinner-party dessert. Allow at least an extra 1½ hours to set the jelly, and chill the custard and sponge.

- **MAKES:** 6
- **PREPARATION:** 1 HR
- **COOKING:** 1 HR

600g rhubarb, trimmed, cut into 3cm lengths  
 330g (1½ cups) caster sugar  
 1 lemon, juiced  
 5 star anise, crumbled  
 2½ x 5g titanium-strength gelatine leaves\*  
 250ml (1 cup) dry sherry  
 Almond bread, to serve

### SPONGE

3 eggs  
 110g (½ cup) caster sugar  
 150g (1 cup) plain flour

### CUSTARD

3 egg yolks  
 55g (¼ cup) caster sugar  
 1 tbs cornflour, sifted  
 250ml (1 cup) milk  
 1 vanilla bean, split, seeds scraped  
 60ml (¼ cup) pouring cream, whipped to soft peaks

### 1 To make rhubarb jelly

Place rhubarb, sugar, lemon juice and star anise in a large, heavy-based saucepan. Cover and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, for 45 minutes, then remove one-third of the rhubarb and reserve. Cook remaining mixture for a further 15 minutes or until soft.

- Strain rhubarb mixture through a fine sieve into a jug, pressing rhubarb with the back of a spoon to release juices. Discard star anise and rhubarb pulp.

- Measure rhubarb liquid; you should have at least 300ml. Add enough boiling water to make 500ml (2 cups). Soften gelatine in cold water for 3 minutes, then squeeze out excess water. Add to hot rhubarb liquid and stir until dissolved. Cool to room temperature.

- Pour 2 tbs jelly mixture into each of 6 x 310ml (1¼-cup) glasses. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until set, or freeze for 30 minutes or until firm enough to spoon over custard in step 4.

### 2 To make sponge

Grease and line a 28cm x 32cm shallow cake pan with baking paper.

- Using an electric mixer, whisk eggs and sugar on high speed until thick and pale, and mixture forms ribbons (see Cooking Notes, last pages).

- Sift one-third of the flour over egg mixture, then, using a large metal spoon, fold in until just combined. Repeat twice until just combined. Spoon batter into the lined pan and bake for 15 minutes or until the centre springs back when lightly pressed. Cool sponge.

### 3 To make custard

Whisk egg yolks with sugar and cornflour in a large bowl until combined. Place milk and vanilla bean and seeds in a saucepan and bring almost to the boil.

- Whisking continuously, add milk mixture to yolk mixture until combined, then return to pan over low-medium heat. Stir for 2 minutes or until mixture boils and thickens, then stir for a further 8 minutes to cook out taste of cornflour.

- Strain through a fine sieve into a bowl, then cover the surface with plastic wrap to prevent a skin forming. Cool completely, then fold in cream.

### 4 To assemble trifles

Spoon 2½ heaped tablespoons of custard over each layer of jelly, then gently tap glasses on a work surface to level the custard.

- Turn out sponge onto a clean board and peel away baking paper. Using a pastry cutter the same diameter as the glasses, cut out 6 sponge rounds.

- Place sherry in a shallow bowl and dip sponge briefly in sherry. Place each sponge round over a layer of custard, then refrigerate for 30 minutes or until custard and sponge are chilled.

- Carefully pour 2 tbs of the remaining jelly mixture into each glass over the sponge, then refrigerate for a further 2 hours or until set. Alternatively, place in freezer for 30 minutes or until set.

- Top with a spoonful of the reserved rhubarb and serve with almond bread.

\* Available from delis. (m)

+ Add crunch to this dessert – serve with crisp Italian biscotti or wafers of almond bread to dunk.

AC BICOLOUR DIP BOWL AND 'ARIA' CHARGER, BOTH PAPAYA; GENSE 'FOLKE' STEEL SPOONS (PART OF A 16-PIECE SET) AND 'TULIPA' LATTE SPOONS (PART OF A 4-PIECE SET), BOTH TOP3 BY DESIGN; DRIADE KOSMO 'ROCK' TUMBLERS, RUBY-SERVING DISH AND 'ANATOLIA' SOUP PLATE, ALL SPENCE & LYDA; 'ROMBUS' DINING CHAIR, THONET **STOCKIST DETAILS** LAST PAGES



+ Can't be bothered to make sponge cake? Just buy one from supermarkets or use madeira cake.

