



Sugar, I Love You

Ravneet Gill

A PASTRY CHEF'S ODE TO SUGAR IN ALL ITS GLORY



Crème Fraîche Loaf, Roasted Plums and Pistachio Cream

Rosy Rong spent ages developing a yogurt sponge for the legendary St. JOHN restaurant in London, and it was a really lovely addition to the summer menu, when seasonal fruit was in abundance. This holds up beautifully and also freezes very well. Serve it by the slice, gently toasted and buttered, with the best seasonal fruit you can find – we used apricots and fresh raspberries here, but I urge you to try the plums and pistachio cream version!

Makes a 900g loaf

For the loaf

6 eggs, lightly beaten
320g caster sugar
180g crème fraîche
finely grated zest and juice of 1
large orange (you need 40ml
of juice)
70g unsalted butter, melted
330g plain flour
4g/scant 1 tsp baking powder
1g/large pinch of fine salt

For the plums and pistachio cream

4 plums
30g caster sugar
200g double cream
2 tbsp pistachio praline paste
1 tbsp honey
pinch of sea salt flakes

Preheat the oven to 160°C fan/180°C/gas mark 4. Line a 900g loaf tin with baking paper on the base and sides.

Gently whisk together the eggs and sugar – by hand is totally fine here as we are not trying to create volume, we are just combining them.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the crème fraîche, orange zest and juice and melted butter. Add this to the whisked eggs and stir to combine.

In another bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder and salt, then add to the batter. Use a whisk to make sure it's all fully mixed together.

Pour into the prepared loaf tin and bake for 50 minutes. Turn the cake around in the oven, then bake for a further 25 minutes, or until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin.

For the plums, cut in half, remove the stones and place in a roasting tin. Sprinkle the sugar on top and roast for 10–15 minutes until the fruit has softened and the skin has blistered. Leave to cool.

To make the pistachio cream, whip the double cream to soft peaks, then add the pistachio praline paste, honey and salt and whisk gently until it all comes together.

Toast slices of the crème fraîche loaf on a hot griddle and serve buttered, with roasted plums and pistachio cream on the side. Joyous.