

# THE LAST TOUCH

**Hello, Puddin'** Sidle up to luscious vanilla or almond-spiked Mexican chocolate. Whatever you're craving, these four homemade puddings have got you covered.

## BRANDIED FIG VANILLA PUDDING

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 2 HR

**1/3** cup sugar  
**2 1/2** Tbsp cornstarch  
2 cups whole milk  
**1/2** cup heavy cream  
2 Tbsp unsalted butter, cut into bits  
**1 1/2** tsp pure vanilla extract  
**1/3** cup fig or other preserves  
1 Tbsp brandy, or to taste  
**1/2** tsp fresh lemon juice

► Whisk together sugar, cornstarch, and  $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp salt in a heavy medium saucepan, then whisk in milk and cream. Bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking frequently, then boil, whisking, 1 minute. Remove from heat and whisk in butter and vanilla. ► Divide among 4 (6- to 8-oz) glasses and chill, uncovered, until cold, at least  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours. ► Stir together preserves, brandy, and lemon juice, then spoon on top of puddings.

**COOKS' NOTE:** For a Web-exclusive recipe using leftover fig preserves, go to [gourmet.com/go/morerecipes](http://gourmet.com/go/morerecipes).



## TAPIOCA PEARL PUDDING WITH LYCHEES AND MANGO

SERVES 6 TO 8

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 1 3/4 HR

**6** cups water  
1 cup small ( $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch) pearl tapioca (not quick-cooking)  
1 (20-oz) can lychees in syrup  
2 Tbsp sugar  
2 (3-inch) strips lime zest  
1 (2-inch) piece peeled ginger, thinly sliced  
1 large ripe mango, peeled and cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces  
1 tsp fresh lime juice

► Bring water to a boil in a heavy medium saucepan, then stir in tapioca. Simmer, stirring often, 10 minutes. Cover and remove from heat. Let stand until most of pearls are translucent, 25 to 30 minutes. ► Drain syrup from lychees into a small saucepan and add sugar, zest, ginger, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt. Simmer, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes, then remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes. ► Coarsely chop lychees and put in a bowl with mango. Drain tapioca in a colander and rinse under cold water until cool, then add to fruit. Strain syrup through a fine-

mesh sieve into fruit. Stir in lime juice and let stand 1 hour for flavors to blend.

## SPANISH RICE PUDDING

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 1 HR START TO FINISH: 2 1/2 HR

**1** cup water  
**1/2** cup long-grain white rice  
4 cups whole milk  
**1/2** cup sugar  
3 (4-inch) strips lemon zest  
1 (3- to 4-inch) cinnamon stick  
**1/2** tsp pure vanilla extract

**GARNISH:** ground cinnamon

► Bring water to a boil with  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt in a large heavy saucepan. Stir in rice and return to a boil. Cook, covered, over low heat until water is absorbed, about 18 minutes. ► Stir in milk, sugar, zest, and cinnamon stick and simmer, uncovered, stirring often, until thickened and rice is tender, 40 minutes to 1 hour. Stir in vanilla. Cool to lukewarm in a large shallow bowl, surface covered with a piece of buttered wax paper.

## MEXICAN CHOCOLATE PUDDING

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 2 HR

**1/2** cup packed light brown sugar  
**1/4** cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
**2 1/2** Tbsp cornstarch  
**1/2** tsp cinnamon  
2 cups plain unsweetened almond milk (see Shopping List, page 106)  
**1 1/2** Tbsp unsalted butter, cut into bits  
**1/2** tsp pure vanilla extract  
**ACCOMPANIMENTS:** lightly sweetened whipped cream; toasted slivered almonds

► Whisk together brown sugar, cocoa, cornstarch, cinnamon, and  $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp salt in a heavy medium saucepan, then whisk in almond milk. Bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking often, then boil, whisking, 1 minute. Remove from heat and whisk in butter and vanilla. Chill in a bowl, surface covered with a piece of buttered wax paper, until cold, at least  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

**COOKS' NOTE:** For a Web-exclusive recipe using leftover plain almond milk, go to [gourmet.com/go/morerecipes](http://gourmet.com/go/morerecipes).