**SPICED FRUIT TRIFLE BY CYRUS TODIWALA**

In India, trifle is one of the most enduring legacies of British influence. Although often regarded as a summer dessert, it can be enjoyed at any time of year, making use of whatever seasonal fruit is available. Here I have used summery fruits, and also included a recipe for making your own sponge, but if pressed for time, you can simply buy a readymade Swiss roll.

SERVES 4–6

**INGREDIENTS**

FRESH STRAWBERRIES 150–200g (5 ½ –7oz), hulled, plus a

handful of whole strawberries to decorate

ICING SUGAR for sprinkling (optional)

FRESHLY GROUND BLACK PEPPER for sprinkling (optional)

BLUEBERRIES 100g (3 ½ oz), fresh or frozen

RASPBERRIES 100g (3 ½oz), fresh or frozen

GELATINE LEAVES 6 (about 10g/ ¼ oz)

READY-MADE CUSTARD 1.2 litres (2 pints)

DOUBLE CREAM 1 litre (1¾ pints), whipped

**FOR THE SPICED FRUIT SYRUP**

GREEN CARDAMOM PODS 3, lightly crushed and seeds

extracted for use (save the pods for flavouring other dishes)

CINNAMON STICK 5cm (2in) piece

CLOVES 2–3

BLACK PEPPERCORNS 3–4

WATER 600ml (20fl oz)

LIME 1, cut into small pieces and pips removed

WHITE SUGAR 250g (9oz)

**FOR THE SWISS ROLL**

LARGE EGGS 3

GOLDEN CASTER SUGAR 70g (2 ½ oz)

SELF-RAISING FLOUR 70g (2 ½ oz), sifted

GROUND CINNAMON OR VANILLA EXTRACT a little, to taste

ICING SUGAR for sprinkling

STRAWBERRY JAM for spreading

**METHOD**

First make the syrup. Put all the spices in a mortar and crush coarsely. Transfer

to a saucepan, add the measured water and lime and bring to the boil. Simmer

for 10 minutes or so, until the spices are well infused in the liquid. Stir in the

sugar, bring back to the boil, then simmer for a further 10 minutes, until the

sugar has dissolved. Set aside to cool slightly, then strain into a bowl. The solids

can be discarded or reused, as you wish.

If making your own Swiss roll, preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6

and line a Swiss roll tin or shallow baking tray with greaseproof paper or

baking parchment.

Break the eggs into a clean heatproof bowl and, using an electric whisk,

gradually beat in the caster sugar and continue whisking until the mixture is

light and foamy, cream in colour, and forms a visible trail behind the whisk.

(This is easier to do, and produces a frothier result, if you place the bowl over

a pan of simmering water.)

Transfer to a work surface lined with a tea towel (to prevent slipping)

and gently fold in the flour a tablespoon at a time. When you have a smooth

batter, mix in the cinnamon or vanilla. Pour into the prepared tin and bake

for 8–10 minutes, until the sponge feels springy to the touch. Allow to cool for

about 5 minutes, then turn out on to a sheet of baking parchment sprinkled

with a little icing sugar. Peel off the top layer of paper and spread a generous

layer of the jam over the sponge.

Using the paper to help you, roll up the sponge as tightly as possible. Set aside

until cool and firm, refrigerating it if you wish.

Quarter or thickly slice the strawberries. Place in a bowl and sprinkle with

a little icing sugar and black pepper, if you wish. Put the blueberries and

raspberries in a saucepan, add the spiced syrup and bring to a gentle boil.

Cook for a few minutes, until the fruits are soft, then whiz the mixture to a

purée. Strain through a sieve, discarding any solids. Set aside until needed.

To make the jelly, soak the gelatine in a little cold water for about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, measure 500ml (18fl oz) of the syrup into a saucepan and heat

gently. Squeeze the gelatine dry, then add to the syrup, stirring until completely

dissolved. Depending on the look you want for your trifle, you can either set

the jelly in a shallow tin, then chop it and spread it over the top, or allow to

cool a bit, then pour it over the trifle. Note that it will not be a crystal clear

jelly because it contains puréed fruits.

To assemble the trifle, slice the Swiss roll and arrange it on the bottom and sides

of a 3.4-litre (6-pint) serving bowl. Add the strawberries, including any juice

they have released, spooning it over the sponge. Now add the jelly, followed by

the custard and whipped cream. Garnish with the whole strawberries.