



Photo Courtesy of Philip Ashley Chocolatiers and Nick Baumgardner

# Sweet Potato Sticky Toffee Pudding

*My grandmother grew sweet potatoes, and she used them in just about everything. As an adult, I have spent a great deal of time learning about the varieties of sweet potato that exist, from the one most know and love (which is actually called the "Beauregard"—I just love that name) to the distant cousin, yuca. My variation on the classic British sticky toffee pudding celebrates the flavors of my favorite Southern holiday desserts, made even better with chocolate and salted caramel. This dessert is perfect for the autumn or winter, but truthfully, there's no bad time to indulge.*

## PREPARE THE PUDDING

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Pierce the skin of the sweet potatoes with a fork several times, then place them on a baking sheet lined with foil or parchment paper. Bake for about 45 minutes, until the skin is puffed up and the natural sugar is caramelized.
2. Once cooled, peel off the skin and mash the sweet potatoes in a bowl, discarding any stringy bits. Stir in the cinnamon and nutmeg.
3. Lower the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
4. In a medium saucepan combine the dates and water. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium and let it simmer until the dates are soft, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
5. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream together the butter and turbinado sugar until light and fluffy, about 1 minute. Add the eggs and vanilla, mixing until well combined, another minute.
6. In another bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, and baking soda.
7. Add the dry ingredients to the butter and sugar mixture, alternating with the mashed sweet potatoes. Start and finish with the dry ingredients, mixing until everything is well combined, about 2 minutes.
8. Add the softened date mixture to the batter and mix until just combined.

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**PREP TIME:** 20 minutes

**COOK TIME:** 90 minutes

**SERVES:** 12 to 16

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## FOR THE PUDDING

2 medium sweet potatoes  
(2 cups mashed)  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg  
1/2 cup pitted dates,  
finely chopped  
1 cup water  
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter,  
plus more for greasing  
1/2 cup turbinado (or firmly  
packed dark brown) sugar  
2 eggs  
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste  
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup unsweetened  
cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda

#### FOR THE TOFFEE SAUCE

1 cup turbinado (or firmly packed dark brown) sugar

1/2 cup heavy cream

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Vanilla ice cream, optional

Whipped cream, optional



- 9.** Pour the batter into a greased 9 x 12-inch baking dish. Bake for about 30 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- 10.** While the pudding is baking, make the toffee sauce. In a medium saucepan combine turbinado sugar, heavy cream, and butter. Cook over low heat, stirring until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture is smooth. Simmer for about 5 minutes until it thickens slightly. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla.
- 11.** Once the pudding is done baking, remove it from the oven and let it cool for a few minutes. Poke holes in the cake and pour the toffee sauce over the whole thing.
- 12.** Serve the pudding warm. You can also serve it with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or a dollop of whipped cream for extra indulgence.