

NESSELRODE PUDDING

Duncan Galletly

*“What do I see? A Nesselrode pudding! As well! I declare, I shall need a course at Carlsbad after such a Lucullus-feast as this.”*¹

Marcel Proust

Nesselrode pudding (Pouding à la Nesselrode), a delicious ice- pudding, flavoured with chestnuts, dried fruits and maraschino, was one of the glories of the Victorian dessert table. Although popular, not every 19th century household had the equipment, ice or time necessary to freeze the pudding in its traditional bombe mould. Domestically therefore, Nesselrode’s dinnertime appearance was likely to have been confined to those households that were better off. Indeed the downmarket New Zealand version from the *Evening Star* (11 February 1911) given above, is not frozen at all, but simply set with gelatine.

Some say the pudding was invented by Carême in 1814 for Count Karl Von Nesselrode (1780–1862), a German-Russian diplomat. Others suggest it was Nesselrode’s chef, M. Jean Mouy who came up with the idea.

Jules Gouffe, ‘chef de cuisine of the Paris Jockey Club’ appears to have taken his recipe directly from Nesselrode’s kitchen. In his *Royal Cookery Book* (1869), translated into English by his brother Alphonse, he says:²

‘Remarks on Marquise and Nesselrode Puddings: I have been favoured with the recipes of both these puddings by one of my old friends, M. Mony,

¹ Proust, Marcel. *Within a Budding Grove* (1919)

² Jules Gouffe (Alphonse Gouffe - Trans). *The Royal Cookery Book*. New Edition. Sampson, Low, Son, and Marston. London, 1869. p. 540. Alphonse was head pastry-cook to Queen Victoria



Count Karl Von Nesselrode (1780–1862)

many years chef at Count Nesselrode’s; I can, therefore, in this case, as in that of the Charlottes a la Chateaubriand and a la Sicilienne, guarantee the authenticity of my recipes, as I receive them direct from their inventors, to whom I am happy to convey here my tribute of thanks and good fellowship.’

Here is Gouffe’s recipe:

Nesselrode Pudding

Peel 40 chestnuts; blanch them in boiling water for five minutes; peel off the second skin, and put them in a stewpan with 1 quart of syrup at 16°, and 1 stick of vanilla. Simmer gently till the chestnuts are done: drain, and press them through a fine hair sieve.

Put 8 yolks of egg in a stewpan, with ½ lb. of pounded sugar, and 1 quart of boiled cream. Stir over the fire, without boiling, till the egg begins to thicken; add the Chestnut Purée, and press the whole, through a tammy cloth, into a basin, and add 1 gill of Maraschino.

Stone ¼ lb. of raisins, and wash and pick ¼ lb. of currants; cook both together in ½ gill of syrup at 30°, and 1 gill of water; drain, and let them cool.

Put a freezing-pot in the ice; pour in the chestnut cream, and work it with the spatula; when it is partly frozen, add 3 gills of whipped cream, and continue working with the spatula until the cream is frozen; then add the currants and raisins, and put the pudding into an ice-mould; close it, and put some butter on the opening, to prevent any salt or water penetrating inside; imbed the mould in ice, and let it remain therein for two hours.³

³ 1 imperial gill equals ¼ pint or 142 ml. A 16° sugar solution has 16 grams of sugar in 100 grams of the final sugar solution. 30° has 30 grams of sugar in 100 grams of solution.

Make the Sauce as Follows

Put 3 gills of boiled cream in a stewpan, with 8 yolks of egg and ¼ lb. of pounded sugar; stir over the fire, without boiling, till the egg begins to thicken; take off the fire, and stir for three minutes more; strain the custard through a tammy cloth, and add ½ gill of Maraschino; Put the sauce on the ice until it is very cold, without freezing.

Turn the pudding out of the mould on to a napkin, on a dish; and serve with the sauce in a boat.

Mrs Agnes B. Marshall, in her *Fancy Ices* (1894)⁴ provides a brown version:

Brown Nesselrode Pudding

Put into a stewpan one and a half pints of single cream, a split pod of vanilla, and four ounces of castor sugar; bring to the boil, then put it in the bain-marie to infuse for about ten minutes; remove the pod and stir the cream onto ten raw yolks of eggs; return the mixture to the pan, and stir it over the fire till the custard thickens, but it must not boil; add one pint of chestnut crumbs (see recipe), then rub it through a tammy-cloth and mix with it one large wineglassful of brandy, one wineglassful of Marshall's Noyeau Syrup or liqueur, a dessertspoonful of vanilla essence, and a quarter pint of strong black coffee; pour the mixture into the charged freezing machine and freeze it till like a batter; then add four ounces of cut dried fruits, and put it into an ice mould containing a pipe, first lining the mould with coffee ice-cream; put the mould into the charged ice cave for about three and a half hours, then remove the cover with the pipe; fill up the space made by the latter with an iced macedoine of fruits (see recipe) and turn out the pudding in the usual way onto a dish. Serve for a dinner ice or for dessert.

Fresh, Cooked, or Iced Macedoine of Fruits

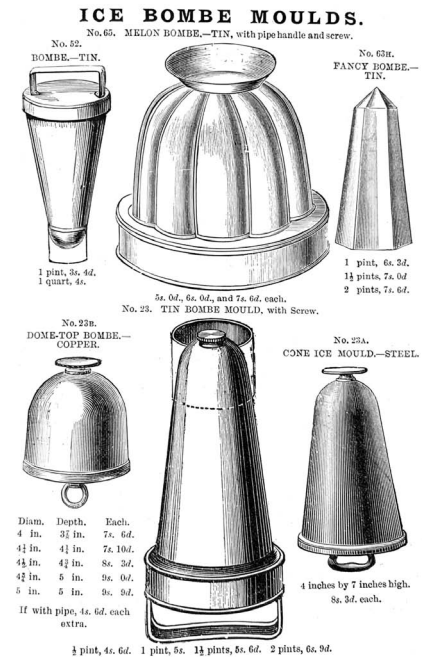
Take any nice fresh raw ripe fruits, such as picked strawberries and stoned cherries (that have been cut in halves, and the kernels removed and thrown in), and grapes that have been skinned and freed from pips, slices of peaches, apricots, &c.; mix well with Noyeau or other liqueur, sweeten with a little castor sugar, colour with a little of Marshall's Carmine, set it on ice till perfectly cold, and serve. Fresh or cooked fruits can be used for this macedoine, and it can be served without being iced if liked.

It would be excellent if iced and served in the prepared ice-tray for a dinner or luncheon sweet.

⁴ Agnes B Marshall. *Fancy Ices*. Marshall's School of Cookery and Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. Ltd. London, 1894.

Chestnut Crumbs

Take a pound of chestnuts, cut off the tops, and bake the nuts for about twenty minutes; remove the skins, and put the nuts to braise in sufficient light stock or milk to cover them, bring to the boil, simmer them till tender, which will take about three-quarters of an hour, when they should be quite dry; colour with a few drops of Marshall's Carmine, and rub them through a wire sieve; then use.



Advertisement: Agnes B Marshall. Fancy Ices.