

If you are not keen on Christmas cake or Christmas pudding and are looking for something which is easy, relatively quick and not as heavy as our traditional seasonal sweets, our Antipodean cousins have the answer. Bearing in mind that it?s the height of their summer at this time of year the mixture of soft fruits is perfectly reasonable. But love them or loath them the super markets will supply you with all the fruits you?ll need. This take on a classic Pavlova is a reasonably modern Australian adaptation and is apparently very popular at Christmas and New Year. If anybody would like to assist in the research cost in verifying this, donations would be gratefully received!!!!

Ingredients:-

6 eggwhites

350g caster sugar

1 tbs white wine vinegar

1 tbs cornflour, sifted

1/3 cup (50g) icing sugar, sifted

600ml double cream

500g mixed berries

Salted caramel

2 1/2 cups (330g) caster sugar

300ml double cream (at room temperature)

1/2-1 tsp sea salt flakes, to taste

Method:-

(1) Preheat oven to 150C. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.

(2) Place eggwhite in the clean, dry bowl of an electric mixer and whisk on high speed for 3-4 minutes to soft peaks. Add caster sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, allowing each to be incorporated before adding the next, whisking until mixture is glossy. Reduce speed to low, then add vinigar, cornflour and icing sugar, beating to combine. Spread mixture over the baking paper in a round or oblong shape, making a slight indent in the centre. Reduce oven to 130C and bake meringue for 1 hour. Turn off oven and leave meringue in the oven, with the door ajar, for 1-2 hours until cooled completely. Remove from oven and place on a platter or serving board.

(3) Meanwhile, for the salted caramel, combine sugar with 1/2 cup (125ml) water in a saucepan over low heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to medium and cook, without stirring, occasionally brushing down the sides of the pan with a damp pastry brush, for 8-10 minutes until a golden caramel forms. Remove from heat and pour in cream (be careful, as mixture will bubble, then seize). Return pan to low heat, add salt to taste and cook, stirring, for 1-2 minutes until smooth.

(4) To serve, whisk cream to soft peaks, then spread over meringue. Scatter over berries and drizzle with salted caramel.