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Winter Berries

This fruit pudding is based on a traditional Danish dessert with a cool twist – frozen berries. Frozen fruit is often less expensive than fresh in the off-season and is a great way to get a variety of produce in your diet year-round. Berries are good sources of fiber and vitamin C. They're also rich in ellagic acid, the phytonutrient responsible for those vibrant red colors.

Red Berry Pudding with Cream

- 1 (10-oz) bag frozen raspberries, defrosted, at room temperature
- 1 (16-oz) bag frozen strawberries, defrosted, at room temperature
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1/3 cup sugar, plus 2 teaspoons, divided
- 2 Tbsp. sliced almonds, optional, for garnish
- 1/4 cup light cream, chilled

Set sieve over mixing bowl. Pour defrosted fruits and their juices into strainer. Dip out 3 tablespoons of combined juices and put in small bowl. Whisk cornstarch into berry juice mixture until smooth. Set mixture aside.

Using a wooden spoon, push defrosted berries through strainer. Occasionally scrape pureed fruit on outside of strainer into bowl using a flexible spatula. When mashed pulp clings in a ball inside strainer, discard it. Measure pureed fruit and juices (there will be about 2 cups) and pour into heavy, medium stainless steel or other non-reactive saucepan. Add cornstarch mixture and 1/3 cup sugar to pot and stir to combine.

Set pot over medium-high heat and cook, whisking frequently, until berry mixture thickens and looks glossy, about 5 minutes in total, taking care not to let it boil. Divide hot pudding among 4 small dessert dishes rinsed in cold water and drained but not dried. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon of remaining sugar over top of each serving to prevent a skin from forming. Or, pour pudding into one large serving bowl and sprinkle with 2 teaspoons sugar. Let pudding sit until it is room temperature. Cover and refrigerate to chill. This dessert keeps, covered in refrigerator, for up to 3 days.

To serve, sprinkle sliced almonds over top of pudding, if using. Spoon 1 tablespoon of cream over each serving, or pour cream into a small pitcher and pass it separately.

Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 206 calories, 3 g total fat (2 g saturated fat), 45 g carbohydrate, 2 g protein, 6 g dietary fiber, 9 mg sodium.