

## A Trifle

Once trifles were anything but, glorious fruit and cream concoctions decorated with crystallised fruit cut into shapes, silver bon-bons or edible gold leaf.

These days it can also be delicious and decadent or truly over-sweet and horrible.

A trifle's success depends on the quality of the ingredients.

*Place in a large glass dish (preferably wide rather than deep as when you serve it you want everyone to be able to have sedimentary layers of wonderful flavours and textures):*

- 1 layer of sponge cake, the best you can find or make your own, moistened with rum, sherry, Cointreau or Kahlua (or hazelnut liqueur if you decide to use chocolate cake instead.) NB Some recipes advise using stale cake. Stale cake is the prerogative of the cook and does not belong on the dining table although it can be day-old cake.
- Optional: a thin layer of very good jam
- 1 layer of fresh berries, i.e. raspberries, blueberries, chopped strawberries
- 1 thin layer of custard. I don't know if good commercial custards exist because (a) I'm not keen enough on commercial custards to waste calories trying them out and (b) we usually have enough eggs to whip one up for Bryan. But if you know a good one in a carton, use it or use the whipped cream.
- More fruit
- More custard pour the sweetened flavoured cream over.

*Optional:* A layer of virulently red or green jelly, which won't be as bad as you think it will be once it's contrasted with the soft custard and cake. Or leave it out. Or – for a truly opulent trifle make a champagne jelly (there are plenty of recipes on the internet) for a delicate, pale gold gesture towards tasteful decadence.

- More fruit.
- A top layer of whipped cream
- Decorations: grated chocolate, fresh berries or both.