

A REGENCY HOLIDAY TREAT RECOMMENDATION FROM

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Sugar Plums

Ingredients

¼ teaspoon aniseeds	4¼ ounces dried apricots
¼ teaspoon fennel seeds	4¼ ounces dried figs
¼ teaspoon caraway seeds	Pinch of salt
¼ teaspoon green cardamom seeds	¼ cup powdered sugar
6 ½ ounces slivered almonds, toasted	¼ cup runny honey
4 ¼ ounces pitted prunes (plums)	1 cup golden caster sugar

Heat a small, non-stick pan. Add to pan the aniseeds, fennel seeds, caraway seeds and cardamom seeds and cook, stirring constantly until lightly toasted and aromatic (be careful they do not burn). Take off the heat, turn into a mortar and pound lightly to bruise, then set aside. In the meantime, combine the almonds, plums, apricots and figs in a food processor. Pulse briefly about 20 times or until all the ingredients are finely chopped (do not over mix, they should not be a solid mass). Turn this mixture into a bowl, add the dry spice seed mixture and salt, then mix in powdered sugar before pouring over the honey. Mix

well with your fingers to combine then scoop the mixture into a 1½ teaspoon portion and form into a ball; roll in the golden caster sugar to coat. Set aside on a wire rack as you roll and coat the remainder of the mixture. Leave the sugar plums out for a couple of days to dry then transfer to an air-tight container where they can be stored for up to a month. In the Georgian period, these were also the basis for "kissing comfits," in which the sugar plums were flavored with aromatics such as ambergris, musk, peppermint, and citrus oils and used for sweetening the breath.