

# Sweet treats roar back as world gets grimmer

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*Old banger: The British Christmas pudding descends from a fruity medieval sausage.*

**Is pudding more important than politics? As war rages and inflation bites, people are turning to comforting cake and chocolate. Some worry we are burying our heads in the soufflé.**

## What's happening?

Are you ready for the gut-busting black forest **gâteau**? Or perhaps the smooth, wobbling mound of cream and sugar known as a blancmange?

To the delight of some and the horror of others, 1970s-style desserts are back in. Gone are plates of sliced fruit or humble sugared bites. Now is the time of big, fancy puddings.

Some researchers think that sugary foods are becoming more popular because people are facing inflation and economic uncertainty. One reporter described them as “comfort snacks.”

## Find out more

There is a physical benefit to cakes. The sugar provides a quick energy boost. Fat helps us store energy for the future, when food might be scarce. It also helps us keep warm.

They can even help us through sickness. The Ancient Greek doctor Hippocrates said: “Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.”

There are also mental benefits. Food brings comfort and happiness. And humans are at their strongest when they are together.

Desserts are also a very important part of various different cultures around the world. Every country has its own sweet treat.

Some say that history is also defined by the best puddings. Politicians come and go. Countries rise and fall. But desserts remain a constant, passed down through the centuries. The British have eaten Christmas puddings since the 16th Century, for example.

**Is pudding more important than politics?**

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## Some say

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Yes! Puddings travel with us through the centuries, lingering in the mouths of generation after generation. Politics is temporary.

## Others think

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No! Politics can affect people in an **existential** way, defining how they live their lives. Pudding is just a fleeting enjoyment.

## Some people say

*"There is no sincerer love than the love of food."*

**George Bernard Shaw (1856 – 1950),  
Irish playwright**

*What do you think?*

## Six steps to discovery

### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - What is your favourite food?

### 2. Wonder

**What questions do you have?** - For example: What is the dictionary definition of pudding?

### 3. Investigate

**What are the facts?** - Find a piece of evidence that puddings are more important than politics.

### 4. Construct

**What is your point of view?** - Friendly aliens visit Earth. What would you serve them for dessert?

### 5. Express

**What do others believe?** - In pairs make a list of the five most important foods in the world.

### 6. Reflect

**What might happen next?** - Write a recipe for your perfect pudding.

## Glossary

**Gateau** - A rich cake containing layers of cream or fruit.

**Existential** - Relating to the state of human existence. Existential dread can refer to grappling with your own experiences of responsibility and death.