

# NESSELRODE PUDDING

*Duncan Galletly*

*“What do I see? A Nesselrode pudding! As well! I declare, I shall need a course at Carlsbad after such a Lucullus-feast as this.”<sup>1</sup>*

Marcel Proust

Nesselrode pudding (Pouding à la Nesselrode), a delicious ice- pudding, flavoured with chestnuts, dried fruits and maraschino, was one of the glories of the Victorian dessert table. Although popular, not every 19th century household had the equipment, ice or time necessary to freeze the pudding in its traditional bombe mould. Domestically therefore, Nesselrode’s dinnertime appearance was likely to have been confined to those households that were better off. Indeed the downmarket New Zealand version from the *Evening Star* (11 February 1911) given above, is not frozen at all, but simply set with gelatine.

Some say the pudding was invented by Carême in 1814 for Count Karl Von Nesselrode (1780–1862), a German-Russian diplomat. Others suggest it was Nesselrode’s chef, M. Jean Mouy who came up with the idea.

Jules Gouffe, ‘chef de cuisine of the Paris Jockey Club’ appears to have taken his recipe directly from Nesselrode’s kitchen. In his *Royal Cookery Book* (1869), translated into English by his brother Alphonse, he says:<sup>2</sup>

*‘Remarks on Marquise and Nesselrode Puddings: I have been favoured with the recipes of both these puddings by one of my old friends, M. Mony,*

<sup>1</sup> Proust, Marcel. *Within a Budding Grove* (1919)

<sup>2</sup> Jules Gouffe (Alphonse Gouffe - Trans). *The Royal Cookery Book*. New Edition. Sampson, Low, Son, and Marston. London, 1869. p. 540. Alphonse was head pastry-cook to Queen Victoria



*Count Karl Von Nesselrode (1780–1862)*

*many years chef at Count Nesselrode’s; I can, therefore, in this case, as in that of the Charlottes a la Chateaubriand and a la Sicilienne, guarantee the authenticity of my recipes, as I receive them direct from their inventors, to whom I am happy to convey here my tribute of thanks and good fellowship.’*

Here is Gouffe’s recipe:

## *Nesselrode Pudding*

Peel 40 chestnuts; blanch them in boiling water for five minutes; peel off the second skin, and put them in a stewpan with 1 quart of syrup at 16°, and 1 stick of vanilla. Simmer gently till the chestnuts are done: drain, and press them through a fine hair sieve.

Put 8 yolks of egg in a stewpan, with ½ lb. of pounded sugar, and 1 quart of boiled cream. Stir over the fire, without boiling, till the egg begins to thicken; add the Chestnut Purée, and press the whole, through a tammy cloth, into a basin, and add 1 gill of Maraschino.

Stone ¼ lb. of raisins, and wash and pick ¼ lb. of currants; cook both together in ½ gill of syrup at 30°, and 1 gill of water; drain, and let them cool.

Put a freezing-pot in the ice; pour in the chestnut cream, and work it with the spatula; when it is partly frozen, add 3 gills of whipped cream, and continue working with the spatula until the cream is frozen; then add the currants and raisins, and put the pudding into an ice-mould; close it, and put some butter on the opening, to prevent any salt or water penetrating inside; imbed the mould in ice, and let it remain therein for two hours.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 1 imperial gill equals ¼ pint or 142 ml. A 16° sugar solution has 16 grams of sugar in 100 grams of the final sugar solution. 30° has 30 grams of sugar in 100 grams of solution.