

WHEELHOUSE PUDDIN'

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DURING THEIR GOLDEN age, steamboats competed to give passengers the kind of luxurious experience associated with the best hotels, featuring crystal chandeliers, gilded mirrors, well-appointed rooms, and fine dining. Those days of luxury may be past, but you can still enjoy this favorite steamboat dessert.

What You'll Need:

- 10 slices home-style white bread, about half a loaf (8 to 10 ounces)*
- 4 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted, plus a little more to butter the dish
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 eggs, beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup seedless raisins

What to Do:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut bread slices into 1- to 2-inch cubes and place in large bowl. (You can trim the crusts first, if you like.)
2. Pour milk over bread cubes and allow to soak until most liquid is absorbed—about 20 to 30 minutes. (Bread will be pretty mushy!)
3. Stir remaining ingredients into bread mixture, adding the raisins last.
4. Rub bottom and sides of a $1\frac{1}{2}$ quart (6 cup) casserole dish with a little butter and pour in bread mixture.
5. Bake 45 to 60 minutes, until the puddin' sets.
6. Serve warm to your favorite steamboat roustabouts. Ice cream makes it even better!

*Cinnamon bread or a sweet egg bread like challah or brioche also work well.