

Courtesy of Lonely Sweets

BAKING & DESSERTS Lonely Sweets

Ube banana pudding from Lonely Sweets

By Beth McKibben, Sarra Sedghi · Rough Draft Atlanta, 4/23/2025

Ingredients

- [ ] 1 bag Nilla Wafers
- [ ] 3 to 6 bananas, sliced between ¼ to ½-inch thick
- [ ] 1 16-ounce tub of Cool Whip
- [ ] 1 3.4-ounce package instant vanilla pudding mix
- [ ] ½ can ube sweetened condensed milk
- [ ] 1 ½ cups whole milk, cold

Directions

1. Add instant pudding mix and milk to a bowl. Whisk together and let mix for 10 minutes.
2. Add ube sweetened condensed milk to the pudding mixture. For enhanced sweetness, use more, up to 1 can of sweetened condensed milk. Mix until well combined and smooth. Set aside.
3. Combine Cool Whip with pudding mixture, folding in with a rubber spatula.

ASSEMBLE THE PUDDING

1. Line a baking or trifle dish with whole or crushed Nilla Wafers.
2. Next, add a layer of sliced bananas, and then add a thick layer of pudding on top. Repeat layers.
3. Let sit in the refrigerator for at least 6 hours, or overnight.
4. After the pudding is set, garnish the top layer with banana slices or Cool Whip.

The story

Banana pudding may feel like a quintessential Southern dessert, but it actually has origins in English trifle. After the Civil War, with trade increasing between the United States and countries in the Caribbean and Latin America, the dessert took on a new identity in the U.S., using ingredients now readily found at markets around the country. That included the once-rarefied banana. In its original form, banana pudding was reserved for the elite. Pudding and whipped cream were time-consuming to make from scratch and required expensive ingredients. As the dessert evolved over the last century, supermarket staples like Cool Whip and instant pudding mix helped popularize banana pudding, bringing it to the masses, especially in the South.Today, the American take on the English trifle is hardly recognizable from its refined former life, and allows for experimentation, thanks to its simple assembly and loose recipe.

Lonely Sweets owner Loan Ly adds ube sweetened condensed milk to the pudding mixture. The Filipino yam lends hints of nuttiness to the dessert and a brilliant purple hue. Check out the recipe for Ly's **ube banana pudding** below.

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