

WARM UP

1 Decide if these sentences are T (true) or F (false), then read the introductory text about porridge and check your answers.

- 1 The word porridge comes from the French for soup.
- 2 Porridge is traditionally the food of rich people.
- 3 People eat sweet porridge in Scotland.
- 4 People eat savoury porridge in England.

GLOSSARY

lower *abbassa*
 boost *incrementa*
 weird *strani, bizzarri*
 all in all *nel complesso*

Porridge: origins and recipes

Originating in the mid 16th century, porridge refers to a thick soup made of barley, called pottage, from the old French meaning ‘that which is put into a pot’. A subsistence food for the poor for centuries, before becoming a breakfast for the rich at the end of the 17th century, in Scotland it is traditionally served with salt and milk or cream and stirred with a special stick known as a ‘spurtle’ or a ‘theevil’; whilst in England it is generally served with milk and sugar.

Are You Getting Your Oats? How to Make Perfect Porridge

What do Prime Minister, David Cameron; model, Kate Moss and tennis player, Tim Henman all have in common? They all choose to start their day with a bowl of steaming porridge. Once the plain, unexciting food of the poor, these days it seems that everyone is eating porridge for breakfast.

To understand why porridge is so popular, you only need look at the health benefits a regular dose of oats offers. High in fibre and protein, oats lower cholesterol, prevent heart disease and boost serotonin, which helps prevent depression. You also digest porridge slowly so you feel full for a long time and avoid snacking between meals and putting on weight. All in all a great way to start the day!

Another good thing about oats, the main ingredient of porridge, is that it’s cheap, but that doesn’t prevent you finding a luxury version on the menu of the Dorchester Hotel, served with brown sugar and cream, or a cheap version at McDonald’s, served with milk and jam. So how should you make your porridge? With water or milk; sugar or salt;



soaking the oats or not? There are many weird and wonderful ways of serving it: celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal serves snail porridge at his restaurant, whilst others serve porridge with shellfish. However you choose to eat it, porridge now has a cool and healthy image, unlike in the past.

ACTIVITIES

READING COMPREHENSION

2 Read the article about porridge and answer these questions.

- 1 What do David Cameron, Kate Moss and Tim Henman have in common?
- 2 How is porridge good for your health?
- 3 Why is porridge good for weight control too?
- 4 What other benefit does porridge bring?
- 5 How do people serve porridge?
- 6 What kind of image does porridge have nowadays?

READING COMPREHENSION

3 Complete this recipe for making porridge with the following words.

add • heat • litre • pinch • reduce • sprinkle • tablespoon • whisk

Perfect porridge

Serves 4 people

Ingredients

- 1 (1) _____ whole milk
- 250 grams porridge oats
- 1 (2) _____ golden syrup
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
- (3) _____ of salt
- 200 millilitres single cream
- 1/2 cup sultana raisins
- brown sugar to serve and additional milk or cream

Method

- Place the milk in a large non-stick saucepan.
- Bring it to the boil and then (4) _____ in the oats, syrup, cinnamon, nutmeg, raisins and salt.
- (5) _____ to a slow simmer and then cook, stirring from time to time, for 8 to 10 minutes, until cooked.
- Whisk in the cream and (6) _____ gently.
- Spoon into warm bowls, (7) _____ with brown sugar and (8) _____ milk or cream to taste.



WRITING

4 Write your own perfect porridge recipe, with whatever savoury or sweet ingredients you choose. When you finish, display your recipe for the rest of the class to see and decide which your favourite recipe is.

MY PORRIDGE RECIPE

Ingredients

Method
