

300gm; featherandbone.com.au) – a mix of Young Henry's apple cider, honey, Dijon mustard and orange juice – and taste regularly.

### 5. TURKEY

A pre-stuffed turkey breast is a great for small gatherings (or small ovens). **Hudson Meats' free-range pre-stuffed turkey breast** (\$29.95/kg, pictured; hudsonmeats.com.au) comes in a neat parcel packed with your choice of sage and thyme or cranberry and roast chestnut stuffing, as is **Victor Churchill's juniper and tea-brined version** (\$80 for 1.3kg-1.6kg, victorchurchill.com).

### 6. BISCUITS

We're all for festive biscuits – ginger trees, chocolate baubles and iced stars make great emergency gifts as well as decorative additions to the post-foast table. Santa will love them, too. Our favourites are **Phillippa's food chocolate vanilla stars** (\$15.90 for nine; phillippas.com.au), **Jocelyn's Provisions ginger trees** (\$11 for four; jocalynsprovisions.com.au)

and the **Sweet Envy Santa pack** (\$8.50, for a pack of decorated carrots, milk bottles and cookies; sweetenvy.com.au).

### 7. SWEETS

There's always plenty of visitors dropping in over the break, so it's best to be prepared with something sweet stashed in the cupboard. We suggest a dense, rich **Margherita panforte** (\$17 for 250gm; fratellifresh.com.au), combining honey and almonds with spiced and candied fruit, or the **Torta Lucia** with hazelnuts and cocoa butter (\$33 for 400gm; fratellifresh.com.au) – both sure-fire crowd-pleasers.

### 8. CHRISTMAS CAKE

Christmas ain't festive without fruitcake. Soaked in a cocktail of rum, brandy and orange juice, and topped with pecans, **Jocelyn's Provisions Christmas cake** (\$60 for small, \$80 for large; jocalynsprovisions.com.au) is a classic that's mighty tasty and, quite possibly, one of the prettiest around.

### 9. POURING CUSTARD

Where there's pudding, there has to be custard. Merna Taouk uses quality ingredients in **DessertMakers' crème Anglaise pouring custard** (\$7 for 200ml; dessertmakers.com.au), including Nixon's free-range eggs (just the yolk, in this case) and Pepe Saya cultured butter. It's good enough to drink straight from the vintage-style milk bottle it comes in.

### 10. MINCE PIES

We like our mince pies boozy, with plump spicy fruit and just the right amount of crumble in the pastry. **Nadine Ingram** at Sydney bakery **Flour and Stone** does, too. She makes her **mince pies** (\$4 each, \$24 for six, \$48 for 12; flourandstone.com.au) with a unique mix of rhubarb, vanilla, candied orange and confit ginger – pretty damn fine.

### 11. PUDDING

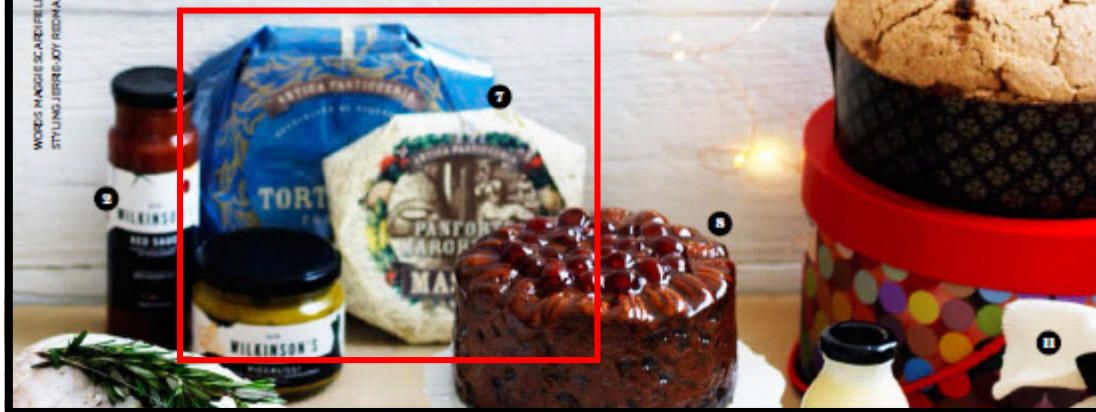
It might not be your nana's recipe (which required hanging back in May), but **Coles Finest vintage pudding** (\$18 for 900gm; coles.com.au)

is hung the traditional way and matured for 12 months by the good folk at Pudding Lane. It combines Australian vine fruit such as currants, raisins and sultanas with brandy from the Barossa Valley. Best served with generous dollops of custard or a healthy scoop of brandy cream – or preferably, both.

### 12. PANETTONE

**Simon Johnson** suggests serving his **SJ 25 Year Anniversary Panettone** (\$59 for 1kg; simonjohnson.com.au) with cherries, ground almonds and sugar crumbs. With quarter of a century under his belt as one of Australia's leading providers, it's advice best heeded. The panettone comes beautifully packaged in one of three artist-designed gift boxes and makes the perfect festive gift.

WORDS: MAGGIE KADREFIELD PHOTOGRAPHY: WILLIAM MERRIM  
STYLING: JESSIE JOY REEDMAN LLOYD & EMMA KNOWLES



As featured in the **December, 2014** edition of **Australian Gourmet Traveller** magazine (see page 35).



Panforte is a traditional delicacy from Tuscany that typically contains fruit and nuts. Masoni have been producing this Italian dessert since 1885 and have included in their range some newer varieties such as figs/walnuts, chocolate coated and spicy panpepato. Panforte

can be enjoyed with a coffee or wine and the end of a meal, but with the artisan appeal of it's packaging, it is great for retail.

**Casa Italia Gourmet Food & Wines Pty Ltd**

Tel: 1300 909 400

Email: sales@casaitalia.com.au

Online: www.casaitalia.com.au



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