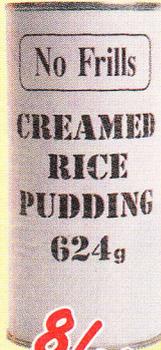


WE TEST THE BEST

CREAMED RICE PUDDING

KWIKSAVE, 624g, 43p

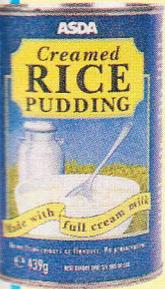
This pudding looked pale and runny when we opened the can—and didn't get any better after heating it up. There was a strong, milky smell and our panel all agreed that there wasn't nearly enough rice. But despite that, it did have a creamy taste and was pleasantly sweet, too. 'A shame it's not thicker,' said one of the adults. Nice, but nothing out of the ordinary. Reasonable value, though.



8/10

ASDA, 439g, 42p

This was pale and too liquid, and the small grains of rice were hard and chewy. Our panel also thought that the milk tasted as if it was skimmed and wasn't nearly creamy enough. 'It's disappointing. There's very little flavour here,' said one tester. Not very exciting at all.



6/10

AMBROSIA, 425g, approx 49p

We all agreed this was what a quality rice pudding should taste like. Its thick consistency, with huge grains of soft rice in a creamy sauce, was everything we'd hoped and expected it would be. This market leader clearly had the edge and our panel didn't waste any time in polishing off second helpings. 'It reminds me of what my mum used to make,' said one panellist. 'More, please,' asked one of the kids. Expensive—but worth paying more for a winning pud.

BEST BUY



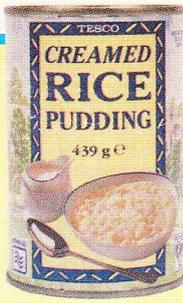
10/10

SAFeway, 425g, 48p

The label said 'made with full cream milk' and the tempting picture on the can promised a treat. Sadly, it was very runny, with a strong smell of evaporated milk. The rice was too soft and bitty, and it was overpoweringly sweet—we tried serving it hot and cold but it made no difference. 'Not my idea of a rice pudding,' said one young tester. Very disappointing all round.



6/10



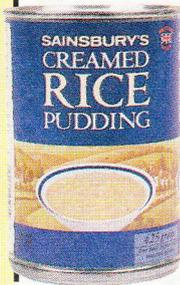
TESCO, 439g, 42p
This was sadly grey in colour, with a runny, milky consistency. The rice was nice and

soft, but there was only a small amount of it and we felt there should have been more. Not surprisingly, it had a very milky taste and texture, and left a slightly sickly aftertaste. 'It looks as though it's been liquidised,' said one tester. Our panel all agreed it needed more substance.

7/10

SAINSBURY'S, 425g, 42p

A warm, yellow-coloured dessert, with a nice, sweet smell. It was so jammed with rice that one young tester said it looked more like porridge than rice pudding! Its thick texture and milky, yet lightly sweet flavour made it a delicious pudding eaten either

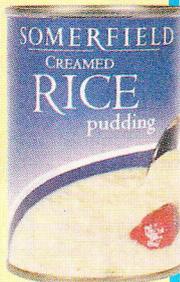


hot or cold. However, we did feel it could have been a touch creamier. 'Not bad,' said one tester. And the rest of the panel agreed.

8/10

SOMERFIELD, 425g, 42p

A rich and thick dessert, with an appetising aroma. There was a good mix of rice, sugar and milk, and the creamy taste made this one popular.



'Lovely—not too sweet,' said one tester. 'Great with a spoonful of jam,' said a younger panellist. A brilliant own-label product, piped to the post by our winner. Highly recommended.

9/10

AMAZING!



'I couldn't believe this tiny baby was mine. I wasn't prepared

Everyone in the office was delighted when Liz the secretary announced she was pregnant. But her colleague, Julie Hunter, wasn't surprised—she'd known Liz was expecting weeks before the announcement.

'I'm psychic and often know somebody's pregnant before they do. I can just sense it,' explains Julie, 34. 'It's happened dozens of times, with friends and colleagues.'

Julie, from King's Norton, Birmingham, is a receptionist by day and

a psychic, healer and tarot card reader by night.

'I first discovered I had psychic powers in my early 20s,' she says. 'I started to hear voices giving me information that would help people, although I never got advice about myself. It never scared me because I knew it was a good power.'

Last autumn, Julie began to feel run down. 'I was working day and night,' she recalls. 'I'd just split from a two-year relationship and was feeling low.'

'I started to comfort eat and noticed I was putting

From my album

Here are more of your fun pictures. Send them to From My Album, WOMAN, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE99 0BB. We need details of who's in the picture and your daytime telephone number. Please enclose an sae if you want us to return your pictures. We pay £25 for each snap printed...



I predicted everyone's pregnancies... except my own!



News Team

for motherhood and felt shocked'

When Julie felt off-colour she didn't think she could be pregnant. She was the expert, after all...

soothe away people's pain—even my own,' she explains. 'But my hands felt cold and I couldn't do a thing. I couldn't interpret the tarot cards either.'

'I felt useless. My psychic gifts had disappeared and I didn't know why. I felt really miserable.'

Last April, the pain in her bladder had become excruciating and it was keeping her awake at night.

Julie's mother, Iris, a retired nurse, was worried when she came to see her. She stayed with her daughter overnight, but by the next morning Julie was feeling no better.

Iris called out her GP, who examined Julie's tender pelvic area. 'There's only one thing this lump can be—and that's a baby. You're heavily pregnant,' she announced.

'I told her she was being totally ridiculous,' says Julie. She wasn't convinced until the doctor called out a midwife, who let her

listen to the baby's heart-beat with a scanner.

'There was no denying it then. I froze in absolute horror. I felt so vulnerable and afraid,' says Julie.

The doctor persuaded her to go into hospital for a check-up. At 3pm on April 5, the ambulance arrived to take Julie and her mum to Birmingham Women's Hospital.

An hour later, Julie was looking at the baby on the monitor in disbelief. Its head had already engaged, which meant Julie was ready to give birth.

At 4.50pm, knowing nothing about breathing techniques or when to push, Julie went into labour. By 9pm, the consultant surgeon had been called because the baby was in distress and the heartbeat was weakening.

Dazed, Julie signed a consent form agreeing to a general anaesthetic and a vacuum delivery. Still wearing her pink slippers

and full make-up, she was taken into the theatre.

At 9.20pm, baby Gareth arrived, weighing 6lb 11oz. As Julie had had no prenatal care, Gareth was whisked away for tests. Julie came round at 11pm, feeling disorientated.

'I couldn't believe the tiny thing in the incubator was mine. I wasn't prepared. I felt shocked,' she says.

Gareth stayed in hospital for a week as he was a few weeks premature. This added to Julie's detachment, making it impossible for her to form a bond with him. It was only when she could touch and care for Gareth that Julie's maternal feelings began to develop.

'I suddenly felt extremely protective towards him and I was filled with a strong sense of love,' she recalls.

'I'd never wanted children, so it's been hard to adjust to Gareth's arrival. He spent a few weeks with a foster mother to



'My hands felt cold and I couldn't interpret the cards'

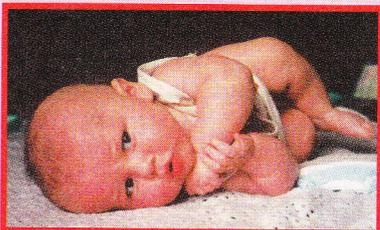
give me time to come to terms with it all. But now I wouldn't be without him.

'Gareth's father doesn't know about him. We split up on bad terms and I haven't been in touch with him since.'

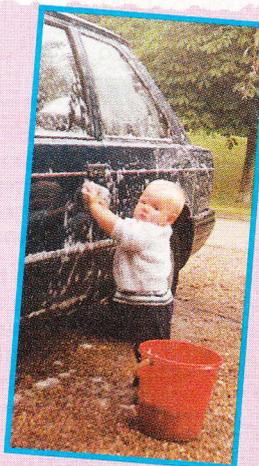
Thankfully, Julie's psychic powers have returned and she's back to reading the tarot cards again. 'It's a bit embarrassing that I've been able to predict my friends' and family's pregnancies—but not my own!'

■ KATE PHILBIN

Whatever happened to modesty? Here's two-year-old Kaitlin Bleasby, trying out her exercises. If she's not careful, she could find herself head over heels. Thanks to her mum, Tracey, from Keswick, Cumbria, for the photo.



Fourteen-month-old Oliver Buckton has his work cut out helping to clean his mum's car. His grandma, Pearl Stephenson, of Ashted, Surrey, sent in this picture.



Who says I'm moody? Thirteen-week-old Lewis Farmer may look a bit cross, but we're sure he's a softy at heart. Our thanks to his mum Claire, from Loughborough, Leicestershire, for sending us this snap.

It's not yet Halloween, but Robert, who's four, Rachel, five, and three-year-old Laura Stephens make perfect witches with their conical hats. 'These must be the most wicked kids I know,' says dad, Barry, from Mid Glamorgan, South Wales. He doesn't mean it...

