

CRÈME BRÛLÉE, FOR EASTER

INGREDIENTS

2 cups heavy cream (divided)
1/2 cup granulated sugar
6 egg yolks
1 tsp vanilla extract
Pinch of salt
4 tsp granulated sugar
fruit, to garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 300F.

Fill a large kettle with water and put it on the stove to boil. You will use this for cooking the crème brûlée in a water bath.

Put 1 cup of heavy cream in a small (2 quart) saucepan. Heat until the sugar is dissolved, maybe about 5 minutes. Remove from stovetop and let sit for about 10 minutes to cool, stirring occasionally. 15 minutes.

Combine the 2nd cup of cream with the egg yolks and stir with a whisk until combined. Add the vanilla extract and the pinch of salt. Combine the two mixtures slowly, stirring constantly with a whisk. Pour the mixture through a fine mesh strainer to remove any solids.

Put the ramekins in the pan. Fill each ramekin about half to two-thirds full with the crème brûlée mixture, distributing the mixture evenly among the ramekins. Slowly add the water to the pan, filling about 2/3 up the side of the crème brûlée ramekins, or about to the level of the mixture inside.

Bake until the center of the custard is just set, about 35 minutes. A perfectly cooked crème brûlée at this point will look wiggly (but not liquid) in the center. The middle should be loose and moveable.

When done, remove the pan from the oven and take the ramekins out of the pan by using tongs. Place them on a wire rack so they can cool evenly. Let cool at least 6 hours, and up to 24 hours.

To caramelize, sprinkle the top of each crème brûlée with the granulated sugar. Use about 1 teaspoon of sugar per ramekin. Use your kitchen torch to evenly heat the top. Use the tip of the blue flame, and move the torch evenly about. At first the sugar will melt and bubble, then it will brown. A few small burned spots are fine. To really make the crust terrific, wait until the first sugared layer cools then add a second layer. Garnish with fruit (optional).

Keep until room temperature until serving. Refrigerate if left over past that day (the crust will become less crisp).