

EGGNOG CRÈME BRULÉE

INGREDIENTS

1 cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons vanilla extract or 1 vanilla bean, split and beans scraped
2 cinnamon sticks
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
2 tablespoon brandy
1 tablespoon rum
5 egg yolks
1/4 cup of granulated sugar, plus more for creating toffee layer

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 300F.

Place the cream, vanilla extract, cinnamon sticks, nutmeg, brandy and rum in a saucepan over medium heat. When it has just come to a boil, remove from the heat and set aside. Lightly whisk the egg yolks and sugar in a bowl until combined. Remove the cinnamon sticks and vanilla bean (if using) from the cream. While whisking the egg mixture, slowly pour in the cream in a thin stream. Make sure you are constantly whisking as you do so to prevent the egg mixture from 'scrambling'.

Return the whole mixture back into the saucepan and over low heat, stir for about 5-7 minutes until the custard is thick enough to coat the back of the spoon. To properly test, coat the back of the spoon with the custard and run your finger through it (the streak should remain without any custard running over it). Place a full kettle of water on boil. In the meantime, pour the custard into 4 x 125ml ramekins or ovenproof dishes and place it in a deep baking dish. Pour enough boiling water until it comes up halfway of the ramekins or dishes.

Bake for 20 minutes or until just set. The middle of the brulées should still have a hint of quiver but it shouldn't be totally liquidy. Bear in mind that if you're using flat dishes instead of the deeper ramekins, then the cooking time should be a little less. Remove from the oven and rest for 5-10 minutes then place it in the refrigerator for a couple of hours until it has cooled and set. To serve, sprinkle the top surface evenly with granulated sugar and blowtorch until browned and toffee'd up. For extra thick toffee, I like to blowtorch one layer of sugar before sprinkling some more and blowtorching again. Serve topped with berries if you wish.