

CHAMOMILE HONEY PANNA COTTA

| MAKE SIX 6 -OUNCE PANNA COTTAS

With white petals surrounding their yellow centers, chamomile flowers look a lot like little daisies. In these sweet, milky custards, chamomile and honey are a natural pair—both of them floral and sweet. Top each panna cotta with coarsely chopped pistachios and a sprinkle of bee pollen for a vibrant and elegant dessert.

2 cups (480ml) heavy cream

1/2 cup (20g) fresh chamomile flowers, stems and leaves removed, or 2 chamomile tea bags

1 cup (240ml) whole milk

1 (**1/4**-ounce/7g) envelope unflavored powdered gelatin

1/4 cup (60ml) mild-flavored honey, like clover or wildflower

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract (recipe follows)

Pinch salt

1/2 cup (65g) chopped pistachios, to serve

2 tablespoons bee pollen, to serve (optional)

Lightly grease six 6-ounce ramekins with a paper towel dipped in a bit of canola or grapeseed oil. Heat the cream in a saucepan set over medium heat until just barely simmering. Add the chamomile flowers (or tea bags), turn off the heat, and let steep for 20 minutes. Strain the cream through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean bowl and reserve.

Pour the milk into a clean saucepan and sprinkle the gelatin evenly over the top, but do not stir. Let the gelatin soften until the grains look wet and like they are beginning to dissolve, about 5 minutes. After the gelatin has bloomed, warm the milk and gelatin over very low heat, whisking occasionally, until the gelatin dissolves, 3 to 5 minutes. Be careful not to let the mixture bubble or simmer, which will inhibit the gelatin's ability to set.

Whisk in the honey, vanilla, and salt. Add the chamomile infused cream and whisk to combine. Divide the mixture among the prepared ramekins and chill them in the refrigerator until set, at least 4 hours and up to overnight. If you are going to leave them overnight, cover each ramekin with plastic wrap.

To unmold the panna cottas, run a thin knife around the top edge of each ramekin to release the sides, and invert it onto a plate; you may have to shake the ramekin gently to get the panna cotta to release onto the plate. Top each panna cotta with a sprinkle of chopped pistachios and a dusting of bee pollen. Alternatively, serve the panna cottas in their ramekins with the garnishes.

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VANILLA EXTRACT

MAKES 1 CUP (240ML)

You may have noticed that I use vanilla beans a lot in this book, which I know can be prohibitively expensive. But vanilla beans are quite economical if you buy them in bulk online. I tend to buy a pound of beans once a year, which is enough to make a big batch of vanilla extract, use whole in recipes, and even give some away to friends. If you don't think you can use an entire pound of beans (usually about fifty), it is worth it to ask a friend or two to split an order with you. Feel free to use this ratio to make more or less extract, depending on your needs.

6 vanilla beans

1 cup (240ml) vodka

1 glass jar or bottle with a tight fitting lid

Slice each vanilla bean in half lengthwise and place them in a glass jar or bottle. Trim the beans to fit the jar if necessary. Pour the vodka over the top, and make sure the beans are completely covered with alcohol. Screw the lid on tightly and give the jar a good shake. Put the jar in a dark, cool place (but not somewhere you'll forget about it) and let it infuse for at least two months before using. Shake the jar every couple of days. After two months, you can strain the extract into another bottle to remove the seeds or continue to let the extract infuse for up to one year.

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