



now *that's*
a MOUTHFUL

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Zoe Nathan and Laurel Almerinda, Cassia, Santa Monica

VIETNAMESE COFFEE PUDDING

This pudding is catnip for coffee lovers. An intense hit of coffee enveloped in a rich creaminess makes this utterly irresistible.

1/4 cup espresso beans
1 cup sweetened condensed milk
1/2 cup whole milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
1/2 cup brewed espresso
3 eggs

3 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/8 tsp kosher salt
3 tablespoons butter, cut into cubes, at room temperature
3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
whipped cream, for serving

Serves 4 to 6

Crush the espresso beans with the flat side of a knife or pulse them briefly in a coffee grinder to break them up, but not turn them into grounds.

In a medium saucepan, combine the condensed milk, whole milk, heavy cream, vanilla bean, crushed espresso beans, and espresso. Cook over low heat, whisking occasionally, until it just begins to simmer. Immediately remove from the heat and let steep for 30 minutes.

Whisk together the eggs, sugar, cornstarch, and salt in a mixing bowl.

Bring the cream mixture back to a simmer and, whisking constantly, slowly pour about a third into the eggs. Pour the combined mixture back into the saucepan and bring it back to a simmer. Do not stop whisking. Cook for about 4 minutes, or until it has thickened enough to coat the back of a spoon.

Strain the custard through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean bowl and whisk in the butter and vanilla.

Press a piece of plastic wrap to the surface of the custard to prevent a skin from forming and refrigerate for at least 4 hours until chilled through and set. Serve, chilled, with a dollop of whipped cream.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This can also be served in individual cups, jars, or ramekins. It also makes one of the best coffee ice creams I've ever tasted. The steps are exactly the same until it comes time to cool down the custard. To make ice cream, place the custard in an ice bath and whisk it as it cools so that it does not set. Churn the cooled custard in an ice cream machine and freeze for 2 hours before serving.

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