

Jitterbug's Bread Pudding with Rum Crème Anglaise

MAKES 6 TO 8 SERVINGS

Ingredients:

6 slices white bread, cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 4 cups)
8 tbsp (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
4 large eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1 tbsp dark rum
1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract
1/4 tsp grated nutmeg
1/4 tsp salt
2 cups whole milk, scalded
2 cups Craisins (dried and sweetened cranberries) or fresh bing cherries if they are still available
1 cup chopped or crushed canned pineapples, drained, liquid reserved
1 recipe Rum Crème Anglaise (recipe follows)

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350°F.
Toss the bread cubes with the melted butter in a large bowl, spread on a large baking sheet, and bake until lightly browned, about 10 minutes.
Transfer to a 7 x 11" baking dish and set aside.
Beat the eggs in a large bowl.
Add the sugar, rum, vanilla, nutmeg, and salt and whisk to combine.
Slowly add the milk, whisking constantly.
Arrange the fruit over the toasted bread cubes. Pour the custard evenly over the mixture, dot with the sliced butter, and bake until the custard sets, about 35 minutes.
Let rest for 15 minutes.
Spoon the pudding into dessert bowls, ladle 3 to 4 tbsp of the rum sauce over each serving, and serve.

Rum Crème Anglaise

(MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUPS)

Ingredients:

4 large egg yolks
2 tbsp cornstarch
6 tbsp sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract
2 cups milk, scalded
¼ cup dark rum
1 drop yellow food coloring, optional

Directions:

Whisk together the egg yolks, cornstarch, sugar, and vanilla in a medium saucepan. Slowly whisk in the warm milk and cook, stirring constantly, over medium-low heat until the mixture thickens, 3 to 4 minutes.

Strain through a fine-mesh strainer into a medium bowl (instead of straining use the immersion blender) and stir in the rum and food coloring, if desired.

Place in the ice machine to chill it.