

Praline Bread Pudding

Chandler also offers delectable desserts in her cache of recipes. This selection is a simplified version of a recipe created by Chandler's former co-worker, pastry chef Heather Bugg Ries.

For the Bread Pudding:

Unsalted butter to grease the baking dish

1 cup milk

1 cup heavy cream

½ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar

2 large eggs

2 large egg yolks

1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

½ tsp. ground cinnamon

½ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

6 large croissants, 1 day old, cut in 1-inch cubes and set aside in a large mixing bowl (about 8 cups)

2 cups coarsely chopped praline pecans

For the Praline Sauce:

1 cup dark brown sugar

¼ tsp. baking soda

¼ tsp. pure vanilla extract

1 tbsp. dark corn syrup

½ cup buttermilk

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cubed

Pinch of salt



To make the bread pudding: Preheat the oven to 375°. Lightly grease a 9- x 13-inch baking dish with butter and set aside. In a large mixing bowl combine the milk, cream, brown sugar, eggs, egg yolks, vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg. Whisk until combined. Pour the pudding over the croissants and coat evenly. Let stand until the croissants have soaked up the pudding, about 5 minutes. Stir in the praline pecan pieces. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish and cover with aluminum foil. Place the dish in a roasting pan with at least 2-inch sides. Place the pan on the middle rack of the oven. Very carefully pour enough hot water around the dish to come halfway up the sides of the baking dish. Slide the rack into the oven, being careful not to slosh water onto the bread pudding. Bake until set, about 25 minutes. Remove the foil and bake until the bread pudding is puffed and golden brown on top, about 15 to 20 minutes.

To make the praline sauce: In a medium saucepot with tall sides, place the brown sugar, baking soda, vanilla, corn syrup, buttermilk, butter and salt. (This mixture tends to boil over if not watched.) Whisk to combine. Place over medium heat and cook, without stirring, until the sugar starts to bubble, about 3 minutes. Whisk until well combined. Raise the heat to medium-high and bring the sauce to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, whisking occasionally, until it starts to thicken, about 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from the heat. Serve the bread pudding warm with the sauce on the side. Serves 8.

Cooking Tips:

–Praline pecans are pecan halves that have been candy coated. They are sometimes also called candied pecans or bourbon pecans.

–Dark brown sugar and dark corn syrup lend a rich molasses flavor to the dessert. It is fine to substitute light brown sugar and light corn syrup if that is what you have on hand.

Variation: Ideally you should use day-old bread for this dish. It is okay to use fresh bread in a pinch. Day-old brioche or French bread can be substituted for the croissants.

Do Ahead: The sauce can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 1 week. Reheat in a double boiler or a microwave.

Time-Saving Tip: It's not as rich in flavor, but you can use store-bought caramel sauce in place of praline sauce.