

BLEU'S NEW ORLEANS' CREOLE BREAD PUDDING SOUFFLE

RECIPE MODIFIED BY BLEU OF THE COMMANDER'S PALACE RECIPE.

INGREDIENTS:

UNSALTED KERRYGOLD PURE IRISH BUTTER, FOR PAN AND RAMEKINS

1 1/2 CUPS SUGAR

1 TEASPOON GROUND CINNAMON

PINCH OF FRESHLY GROUND NUTMEG

3 MEDIUM WHOLE EGGS

1 CUP HEAVY CREAM

1 TEASPOON PURE VANILLA EXTRACT

5 CUPS DAY-OLD FRENCH BREAD, OR OTHER LIGHT BREAD, CUT INTO 1-INCH CUBES

1/3 CUP RAISINS

9 MEDIUM EGG WHITES, ROOM TEMPERATURE

1/4 TEASPOON CREAM OF TARTAR

INSTRUCTIONS:

PREHEAT OVEN TO 350 DEGREES. BUTTER AN 8-INCH SQUARE BAKING PAN; SET ASIDE.

COMBINE 3/4 CUP SUGAR, THE CINNAMON, AND NUTMEG IN A LARGE BOWL. BEAT IN

WHOLE EGGS UNTIL SMOOTH; WHISK IN CREAM AND VANILLA. ADD BREAD CUBES; STIR,

ALLOWING BREAD TO SOAK UP CUSTARD. SCATTER RAISINS IN GREASED PAN; TOP WITH EGG MIXTURE, WHICH WILL PREVENT RAISINS FROM BURNING. BAKE UNTIL PUDDING IS GOLDEN AND FIRM TO THE TOUCH AND A CAKE TESTER INSERTED IN CENTER COMES OUT CLEAN, 25 TO 30 MINUTES. IT SHOULD BE MOIST, NOT RUNNY OR DRY. COOL TO ROOM TEMPERATURE.

BUTTER SIX 6-OUNCE CERAMIC RAMEKINS; SET ASIDE. IN THE BOWL OF AN ELECTRIC MIXER, WHISK EGG WHITES AND CREAM OF TARTAR UNTIL FOAMY. GRADUALLY ADD THE REMAINING 3/4 CUP SUGAR; CONTINUE WHISKING UNTIL SHINY AND THICK. TEST WITH A CLEAN SPOON. IF WHITES STAND UP STIFF, LIKE SHAVING CREAM, WHEN YOU PULL OUT THE SPOON, MERINGUE IS READY. DO NOT OVERWHIP, OR WHITES WILL BREAK DOWN AND SOUFFLE WILL NOT WORK.

IN A LARGE BOWL, BREAK HALF THE BREAD PUDDING INTO PIECES USING YOUR HANDS OR A SPOON. GENTLY FOLD IN A QUARTER OF THE MERINGUE, BEING CAREFUL NOT TO LOSE THE AIR IN THE WHITES. DIVIDE A PORTION OF THIS MIXTURE AMONG THE RAMEKINS. PLACE REMAINING BREAD PUDDING IN BOWL, BREAK INTO PIECES, AND CAREFULLY FOLD IN REST OF MERINGUE. TOP OFF SOUFFLES WITH THIS LIGHTER MIXTURE, PILING IT HIGH, ABOUT 1 1/2 INCHES OVER TOP EDGE OF RAMEKINS. WITH A SPOON, SMOOTH AND SHAPE TOPS INTO A DOME OVER RAMEKIN RIMS. BAKE IMMEDIATELY UNTIL GOLDEN BROWN, ABOUT 20 MINUTES. SERVE IMMEDIATELY. USING A SPOON AT THE TABLE, POKE A HOLE IN THE TOP OF EACH SOUFFLE, AND SPOON THE ROOM-TEMPERATURE WHISKEY SAUCE INTO THE SOUFFLES.

WHISKEY SAUCE INGREDIENTS (MAKES ABOUT 1 1/2 CUPS):

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 CUPS HEAVY CREAM
2 TEASPOONS CORNSTARCH
2 TABLESPOONS COLD WATER
1/3 CUP WHITE GRANULATED SUGAR
1/3 CUP GREAT QUALITY BOURBON

INSTRUCTIONS:

PLACE CREAM IN A SMALL SAUCEPAN OVER MEDIUM HEAT AND BRING TO A BOIL.

WHISK TOGETHER CORNSTARCH AND WATER; ADD CREAM WHILE WHISKING.

BRING TO A BOIL.

WHISK; LET SIMMER FOR A FEW SECONDS, TAKING CARE NOT TO BURN MIXTURE ON BOTTOM.

REMOVE FROM HEAT; STIR IN THE SUGAR AND BOURBON.

STIR UNTIL THE SUGAR DISSOLVES. LET COOL TO ROOM TEMPERATURE.

COOK'S NOTE:



NEW ORLEANS FRENCH BREAD IS VERY LIGHT AND TENDER. IF ANOTHER BREAD IS USED THAT IS TOO DENSE, IT WILL SOAK UP ALL THE CUSTARD AND THE RECIPE WON'T WORK.