

Cassis Crème Brulée



James Brown, MCGB

INGREDIENTS (to serve four)

4 large egg yolks
½ pint/ 300ml double cream
2oz/ 50gm icing sugar, sifted
1 dessert spoon of Birds original custard powder, sifted
4 dessert spoons of blackcurrant jam
1fl oz/ 25ml Crème de Cassis liqueur
1 vanilla bean or 1 teaspoon good quality vanilla essence
4 teaspoons castor sugar

Equipment List

2 pint plastic jug
Food mixer or whisk
Bain Marie (double boiler)
Microwave oven
Food thermometer
Sieve
4 ramekins
Blow torch or very hot grill

METHOD:

Cut the vanilla bean in half lengthwise. Scrape out the tiny seeds with the tip of a sharp office knife. Place the seeds and the bean into the plastic jug. Add the cream and place the jug in the microwave. Heat on low power to allow the vanilla flavour to infuse into the cream.

Mix the blackcurrant jam with the cassis liqueur. Spoon the mixture equally into the base of the 4 ramekins. Take care not to get jam on the rims. Put to one side.

Beat the egg yolks with the sifted icing sugar and sifted custard powder until light and creamy. Bring the cream infusion to the boil by microwaving on full power. Keep watching so it doesn't boil over. Remove the vanilla bean and discard. Pour the hot cream onto the egg mixture slowly and steadily whilst continuing to beat it.

Put the mixture into your bain-marie and stir constantly until the custard starts to thicken. Monitor the temperature with your thermometer. The custard should reach 70°C in order to cook the eggs, but not 80°C. If it gets too hot the eggs will scramble.

Pour the custard into the ramekins to just below the rim. Put the brulées into the fridge and chill for 3 hours at least.

To serve, remove the brulées from the fridge and sprinkle the castor sugar evenly over the top. Blow torch or grill the brulées to give them a caramelized crispy topping.

To Garnish

I like to serve these Crème Brulées with a small quenelle of jasmine tea and mint sorbet, fresh fruits and berries, a couple of fresh mint leaves and a shortbread biscuit.

