



Brioche Bread Pudding with Berries and Whipped Cream

Dolce, Napa Valley

This is a very simple dessert—just remember to assemble when everything is fresh and warm. This dessert goes great with all kinds of seasonal fruit: in springtime, source ripe strawberries and raspberries; in summer, look for beautiful stone fruit such as peaches or cherries; and in the fall, consider poaching apples or pears. This dish pairs well with Dolce because of the soft textures that come from the pudding and the fruit-forward nature of Dolce.

Ingredients

1 loaf brioche,
cut into 1-inch cubes
1 quart half-and-half
½ vanilla bean
10 egg yolks
1 cup granulated sugar

METHOD

Preheat oven to 220°F and place the brioche cubes in an 8" X 10" baking pan.

Heat the half-and-half in a heavy-bottomed, medium sauce pan. Scrape the vanilla seeds into the half-and-half and add the bean pod. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer, but not to a boil.

In a medium bowl, add the egg yolks and sugar. Whisk until combined. Once the half-and-half has simmered, slowly temper into the egg mixture—whisking the egg mixture while adding the hot liquid a little at a time. This process helps infuse flavors without cooking the egg. Discard the vanilla bean pod. Pour the hot pudding base over the brioche and cover with plastic wrap. Press the plastic wrap into the mixture to help the brioche absorb the liquid, then cover the plastic wrap with a sheet of foil.

Place an empty jelly roll pan on the center rack of the oven and place the pan of brioche bread pudding on the cookie sheet. Fill the cookie sheet with warm water, forming a water bath around the pan. Bake for 40 minutes at 220°F. When you check the pudding, the liquid should still be loose and will provide a delicious sauce for the pudding.

Serve immediately, or set aside and re-warm when ready to serve with fruit, whipped cream and a glass of Dolce.

Serves 6-8