

Rich Bread Pudding with Crisp Cinnamon-Sugar Topping

Source: Cooks Illustrated The New Best Recipe Cookbook

Serves 8-10

Cinnamon-Sugar Topping

2 tablespoons sugar

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Bread Pudding

4 large eggs, plus 1 large egg yolk

¾ cup sugar

2 ½ cups whole milk

2 ½ cups heavy cream

3 tablespoons bourbon

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

¾ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

¼ teaspoon salt

12 ounces (about ½ loaf) good-quality American-style white bread, sliced 3/8 inch thick and cut into 1 ½ inch cubes (about 8 cups)

1 ½ tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus more for greasing the baking dish

1. FOR THE TOPPING: Mix the sugar and cinnamon together in a small bowl
2. FOR THE PUDDING: Adjust an oven rack to the lower-middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Butter a 13 x 9 inch baking dish.
3. Whisk the eggs, yolk, and sugar in a large bowl to blend well. Whisk in the milk, cream, bourbon, vanilla extract, nutmeg and salt. Stir in 6 cups of the bread cubes; mix thoroughly to moisten. Let stand 20 minutes.
4. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish. Scatter the remaining 2 cups bread cubes on top, pushing them down gently to partially submerge. Brush the exposed bread with the melted butter and sprinkle with the topping. Bake until the pudding turns deep golden brown, is beginning to rise up the sides of the baking dish, and jiggles very slightly at the center when shaken, 45 to 50 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool until set but still warm, about 45 minutes. Serve as is or with whipped cream.

Variation: Rich Bread Pudding with Raisins and Walnuts

Follow the recipe above, increasing the bourbon to 1/3 cup. Soak ¾ cup raisins in the bourbon until plumped, 20-25 minutes. Stir the plumped raisins, with any remaining bourbon, and 1 cup chopped walnuts into the soaked bread mixture in step 3. Proceed as directed.

Bourbon Sauce Recipe

Courtesy of: Bon Appétit

¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter

½ cup sugar

3 tablespoons whipping cream

2 tablespoons bourbon

Pinch of salt

Melt butter in small saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in remaining ingredients. Simmer until thickened. Cool slightly.