

CHOCOLATE SEMIFREDDO WITH CHERRY SAUCE

Loosely adapted from America's Test Kitchen by Andrea Kenter

Serves 8-10 for sit down dessert; ~20 small dessert bites

Active prep time: 30 min; Inactive prep time: 6-8 hrs

INGREDIENTS

1/2 c heavy whipping cream

1/4 c water

1/2 t espresso powder

1 T vanilla extract

3 whole eggs

5 T granulated sugar

1/4 t salt

8 oz chopped bittersweet chocolate

1 1/2 c heavy whipping cream

12 oz frozen sweet cherries (pitted)

1/4 c granulated sugar

1 1/2 t cornstarch

2 T Kirsch liqueur

1 T fresh lemon juice

Equipment needed: Stand mixer, saucepan, measuring cups & spoons, mixing bowls, 8 1/2" x 4 1/2" metal loaf pan, plastic wrap, whisks, rubber spatula, baker's pan spray, fine-meshed sieve

SEMIFREDDO

Grease the bottom of a metal loaf pan, then line with plastic wrap with overhanging sides. Two pieces overlapping may be easier. Set aside in the fridge.

Combine the heavy cream and water in a saucepan. Stir and bring to a simmer over medium heat.

Separately, combine the espresso powder and vanilla until powder is dissolved. Set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar and salt.

Add the cream from the saucepan to the egg mixture slowly, whisking continually as it comes together. Add this all back to the saucepan. Stir constantly for ~5 minutes on medium low, or until it reaches 160-165°F. Use a quick-read thermometer here.

CAUTION: Too long will scramble the eggs.

Remove from heat. Into a large glass bowl of chopped chocolate, pour this egg mixture through a fine-meshed sieve, and let sit ~5 minutes to soften. Whisk until smooth, then add in the espresso mixture. Let this cool COMPLETELY for 15 minutes. Using an ice bath here will speed the cooling process.

In a stand mixer, whip 1 1/2 c heavy whipping cream, starting on low for 30 sec, medium for 30 sec, then high for 45-60 sec until soft peaks are formed.

This is where the chocolate custard becomes a semifreddo:

First, add only 1/3 whipped cream into chocolate mixture. Whisk this in. Add the rest of the whipped cream carefully using a rubber spatula. Cut and fold in until no streaks are visible, though sometimes, the streaks actually add a pretty visual.

Pour the semifreddo into a 8 1/2" x 4 1/2" loaf pan. Level the top. Fold over the plastic, sealing the pan. Freeze for at least 6 hours.

CHERRY TOPPING/SYRUP

Combine the frozen cherries and sugar. Toss to coat. Microwave on HIGH for 1 1/2 min. Stir well. Microwave one more minute. Make sure the sugar is completely dissolved.

Pour this through a fine-meshed sieve into a saucepan, separating the juices from the solids. Set fruit solids aside. Bring juices to a simmer on medium-high.

Make a slurry with cornstarch and cherry liqueur. This will add a special dimension of flavor. Add this to the cherry reduction when it just starts to boil. Stir together for 1 -2 minutes only, until glossy and jammy. The liquid will be quickly changing so DO NOT OVERCOOK. Remove from the heat. Add back the cherry solids.

Add lemon juice. Stir thoroughly. Store in fridge up to a week ahead. Cool completely before adding as topping to semifreddo.

When the semifreddo has completely firmed up, invert on serving plate or prep surface. Pan should lift off easily. If necessary, use warm palms to loosen walls, then lift to remove. Dipping briefly into a pan of warm water is another remedy. Remove the plastic and with a hot off-set spatula, smooth over any imperfections. Cut into 3/4" slices, using hot clean knife to create perfect edges. Serve with cherry topping. Garnish with mint leaf or candied almonds. Savor and enjoy.

CHOCOLATE SEMIFREDDO WITH CHERRY

TOPPING

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WHITE CHOCOLATE TOASTED ALMOND SEMIFREDDO

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

Scant cup sliced almonds, toasted lightly (3 1/2 oz)

1/4 tsp salt

1 T unsalted butter

6 ounces fine-quality white chocolate, chopped

2 large eggs

1/3 c sugar

1 tsp vanilla

1/4 tsp almond extract

1 1/2 c chilled heavy cream

Directions:

Line a metal loaf pan, 8 1/2" x 4 1/2" x 2 1/2" with plastic wrap, leaving a 2" overhang on ends, and chill in freezer.

In a skillet, cook almonds with salt in butter over moderately low heat, stirring until almonds are well-coated, about a minute.

Chill almonds until cold.

In a metal bowl set over a pan of hot water (not simmering) melt chocolate, stirring occasionally, and remove bowl from heat.

In another metal bowl, beat eggs with sugar to combine.

Set bowl over a pan of simmering water and beat until thick and pale, and mixture registers 140* with an instant thermometer.

Continue beating over simmering water 3 minutes and remove from heat.

Beat in chocolate, vanilla, and almond extract.

In another bowl, beat cream until it just holds stiff peaks and fold into egg mixture gently but thoroughly.

Fold in almonds and pour mixture into prepared pan.

Cover pan with plastic wrap and freeze semifreddo 8 hours or overnight.

Unmold semifreddo onto a platter, discard plastic wrap, and cut into thick slices. Cut slices crosswise into thirds.

Garnish as needed with fruit or mint leaves.

Loosely adapted by Andrea Kenter

MOCHA SEMIFREDDO

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 4 mins

Servings: 2

Additional time: 8 hours

Total time: 8 hrs 14 min

Ingredients:

2 large eggs

2 T granulated sugar

1 T coffee-flavored liqueur such as Kahlua

1 1/2 t instant coffee granules

1 t unsweetened cocoa powder (optional)

1/4 c ice cold heavy whipping cream

1 T granulated sugar

1 t whipped cream for garnish (optional)

1 pinch unsweetened cocoa powder for dusting (optional)

Directions:

Whisk eggs, sugar, coffee-flavored liqueur, instant coffee, and 1 teaspoon cocoa powder together in a metal bowl.

Place bowl over low heat on the stove (holding carefully with a dish towel) and continue whisking until mixture thickens, 4 -6 minutes. Whisk continually to prevent eggs from scrambling. Stop when you achieve "ribbons" in the mixture. Could use an electric hand held mixer. Remove bowl from the heat and let mixture cool completely. A bowl of ice water works well to speed this process.

Whisk ice-cold heavy cream and sugar together in a chilled bowl until stiff peaks form, 3-4 minutes. An electric mixture makes this much more efficient. Add cooled egg-coffee mixture to the whipped cream. Stir carefully with a rubber spatula until just combined.

Transfer mixture to serving cups. Wrap cups in plastic wrap and freeze until firm, 8 hours or overnight. Garnish with whipped cream and a dusting of cocoa powder or nutmeg.

Enjoy.

Loosely adapted from a Chef John recipe by Andrea Kenter

CITRUS SEMIFREDDO

Prep Time: 20 min

Total Time: 8 hr 20 min

Serves: 8-10

INGREDIENTS:

Nonstick cooking spray

4 oz amaretti cookies, crushed, about 20 small cookies, plus more for sprinkling

3 T unsalted butter, melted

1/2 c sugar plus 1/4 c

8 large egg yolks

1/4 c lemon juice

3 T lime juice

2 T limoncello

Pinch salt

1 lemon, zested

1 lime, zested

1 c heavy whipping cream

DIRECTIONS:

Spray a 9" x 5" x 3" metal loaf pan with nonstick spray.

Line the pan with plastic wrap, allowing the excess to hang over the ends and sides.

Combine the crushed amaretti cookies and the melted butter. (Crush these cookies easily in a small food processor until medium consistent texture is met, not too fine.)

Put in the lined pan and press down to firm and form a crust.

Whisk 1/2 c sugar, egg yolks, lemon juice, lime juice, limoncello, and salt in a large metal bowl to blend.

Set the bowl over a saucepan of simmering water with out touching the water.

Whisk the egg mixture until it is thick and creamy, and a thermometer reads 160°F, about 5 minutes.

Set the bowl of custard into another bowl of ice water to cool completely. Stir in the zest.

Beat the cream and remaining 1/4 c sugar in another large bowl using an electric mixer, until firm peaks form.

Using a large rubber spatula, gently fold the whipped cream into the custard.

Spoon the mixture onto the prepared crust.

Fold the overhanging plastic wrap over the custard then freeze, at least 8 hours or up to 3 days.

Unfold the plastic wrap.

Invert the semifreddo onto a pretty platter and peel off the plastic wrap.

Cut the semifreddo into 3/4" slices. Sprinkle with crushed amaretti cookies.

Enjoy.

Loosely adapted by Andrea Kenter

STRACCIATELLA SEMIFREDDO

Prep time: 18 minutes (plus 8 hours inactive)

Cook time: 20 minutes

Serves: 6-8

INGREDIENTS:

CRUST:

Nonstick cooking spray

3 plain or almond biscotti, ~4 oz.

1/4 c toasted hazelnuts**

4 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted

Parchment paper

FILLING:

8 egg yolks at room temperature

1/2 c sugar, plus 1/4 c

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

1/4 tsp fine sea salt

1 c heavy cream

3/4 c Nutella at room temperature

DIRECTIONS:

For the CRUST, place an oven rack in the center of the oven. Preheat to 350°F. Spray a 9" x 5" loaf pan with cooking spray and line the pan using parchment paper, cut into 2 pieces: 3" x 15" and 7 1/2" x 12". Let the excess hang over the edge. This will form handles that will make it easy to lift the semifreddo out of the pan.

In a food processor, blend the biscotti and hazelnuts together until finely ground. Add melted butter and pulse until the crumbs are moistened.

Using a flexible spatula, press the crumbs into the bottom of the pan. Bake 8 to 10 minutes until the edges of the crust are golden. Let the pan cool on a wire rack for 20 minutes.

FILLING:

In a medium stainless steel or glass bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, 1/2 c sugar, vanilla extract and salt until smooth.

Put the bowl over a simmering pan of water, making sure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water (prevents curdling). Whisk until the egg mixture is pale, thick and creamy.

Test with an instant-read thermometer, ~ 160°, which should take between 10 - 15 minutes of constant whisking. Put the bowl into a larger bowl of ice water to help cool the mixture completely. In another bowl, using an electric hand mixer, beat the cream until thick. Add the remaining 1/4 c sugar and beat until the cream holds stiff peaks. Mix 1/4 of the cream into the cooled custard. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold the remaining cream into the custard. Drop spoonfuls of the Nutella into the custard mixture and gently fold, but do not mix in completely. The Nutella should remain somewhat chunky. Spoon the mixture

into the prepared crust. Fold the overhanging parchment paper over the top and freeze for at least 8 hours or up to 3 days.

**To toast the hazelnuts, arrange in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Bake @ 350°F for 8 - 10 minutes until lightly toasted. Cool completely before using.

TO SERVE:

Run a thin bladed spatula around the edge of the semifreddo between the parchment paper and the pan. Unfold the paper and invert the semifreddo onto a serving plate or platter.

Peel off the paper carefully and cut into 1" thick slices. Serve immediately on chilled plates.

Serve with a small espresso or a great brew of regular coffee.

Loosely adapted by Andrea Kenter