

Lemon pots de creme

Ingredients and Instruction for 9 – 4 ounce ramekins

Necessary equipment : 6, 6 oz. ramekins or 9, 4 oz. ramekins, instant read thermometer, fine sieve, foil (large enough to cover the roasting pan)

- finely grated zest of 4 lemons
- 3/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar divided in 1/4 cup each
- 3-1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 vanilla bean, seeds scraped and pod reserved (or 2 tsps pure vanilla extract)

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- 10 large egg yolks
- Sweetened whipped cream for garnish (optional)

1. Getting ready - Position a rack in the middle of the oven. Place ramekins in a large roasting pan or baking dish with high sides.
2. In a small saucepan, combine the lemon zest, lemon juice and 1/4 cup of the sugar. simmer until reduced to 1/2 cup, about 15 minutes. Set aside.
3. In a medium saucepan, combine the cream, 1/4 cup of the sugar and the vanilla seed and pod (if you're using vanilla extract, do not add it yet) and bring to just below boiling. Remove from heat. Set aside.
4. Heat oven to 325F. Boil a large pot (kettle is easier to use) of water for water bath. In a medium bowl, beat the egg yolks with last 1/4 cup of sugar until smooth. Gently whisk a ladleful of the hot cream (step #3) into the yolks. Pour this yolk mixture back into the pot of cream mixture and whisk.
5. Cook slowly, stirring constantly at low heat until the mixture reaches 170F on an instant- read thermometer, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the reserved lemon syrup (step #2) and strain immediately through a fine sieve. If you're using vanilla extract, stir it in at this point.
6. Divide the mixture among the ramekins in the roasting pan. put on the oven rack then pour enough boiling water into the pan so that it comes halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Loosely cover with foil on top. Bake for 25 to 45 minutes until the custard is set but the center responds with a firm jiggle when you nudge the ramekins, and the center of the custards register 150F to 155F on an instant-read thermometer.
7. Let custard cool to room temperature in their water bath. Remove the custard from the bath, cover them with plastic and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Garnish with a dollop of sweetened whipped cream and maybe some fruits.

