

Carolyn's "Classic" Banana Pudding

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Cooking With Carolyn

Ingredients

Yield: 12 to 14 Servings

5½ Cups Whole Milk
1-12 Ounce Can Evaporated Milk
1 Whole Vanilla Bean
8 Egg Yolks
1½ Cups Granulated Sugar
½ Cup Cornstarch
¾ Teaspoon Kosher Salt
1 Tablespoon Butterscotch Schnapps (optional)
2 Boxes Vanilla Wafers (Recommended: Nabisco "Nilla" Wafers)
10 to 12 Bananas

Directions

Add 4½ cups of the whole milk and all of the evaporated milk to a large stainless steel skillet over medium heat. Cut the vanilla bean in half and use the back of the knife to scrape the vanilla from the pod. Add the vanilla and the pod to the simmering milk and whisk to combine. Allow the milk to simmer while prepping the egg mixture, about 5 to 10 minutes.

Next, combine the egg yolks, sugar, cornstarch, salt and the remaining cup of whole milk into a large bowl. Whisk until smooth and combined. Pour half of the simmering milk into a pitcher. (**Note:** This next step is critical. You're going to be tempering the eggs in the mixture meaning slowly bringing the eggs up to temperature without cooking them in the bowl.) Slowly drizzle the hot milk into the egg mixture **while quickly whisking**. Once combined, whisk the egg mixture back into the simmering milk. Remove the vanilla bean pod.

The skillet should still be over medium heat. Allow the pudding to come up to a boil. Once it starts to boil, whisk to keep it smooth during the cooking process. Whisk continuously for the first 2 minutes. After that, whisk for 5 to 6 minutes more. The rhythm can be, whisk for 30 seconds and stop for 10 seconds. The pudding will thicken as time goes on.

Once done, pour the pudding into a large bowl. Whisk in the butterscotch schnapps. Let the pudding cool for about 10 minutes before covering with saran. When covering with the saran, place it directly on top of the pudding to prevent it from forming a skin on top. Continue to cool it on the counter for another 15 minutes or so. Refrigerate for 6 to 8 hours. After refrigeration, whisk the pudding one final time until smooth.

Assembling:

Using a 9x13 glass dish, lay the first flat layer of vanilla wafers. Next, add 5 to 6 sliced bananas (**Note:** You may use less bananas if desired.) Then spread half of the pudding on top of the bananas making sure they are completely covered. Follow with more bananas, pour the last half of the pudding and spread it out evenly. Finally, shingle the wafers on top of the pudding. Refrigerate until time to serve.