

Caramel Ricotta Flan

Budino di Ricotta

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From *A Fresh Taste of Italy* by Michele Scicolone (Broadway Books). The custards can be baked and refrigerated for up to 3 days before serving. The cups will be easy to clean if you soak them in water for a few hours.

Ingredients

- 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 container (15 ounces) or 2 cups whole-milk ricotta
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup whole milk
- 1-1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract



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Directions

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

In a small saucepan, combine 1 cup sugar and ¼ cup water. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally until the sugar dissolves. When the mixture begins to boil, stop stirring and cook until the syrup starts to brown around the edges. Then gently swirl the pan over the heat until the syrup is an even golden brown. Immediately pour the caramel into six 6-ounce custard cups. Protect your hand with an oven mitt and swirl the cups to coat the bottom with the caramel. Let cool briefly.

In a food processor or blender or using an electric mixer, beat the ricotta for 5 minutes or until very smooth. Blend in the eggs, milk, remaining sugar and vanilla. Pour into the cups. Place the cups in a roasting pan or Pyrex baking dish. Pour hot water into the pan to reach about halfway up the side of the cups. Place in the oven. Bake until the tops are set but the centers are still soft and jiggly when the cups are tapped, about 50 minutes.

Place the cups on a rack to cool slightly. Cover the cups and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. To serve, run a small knife around the pudding and invert onto serving plates. Some caramel may stick to the bottom of the cups, but there will still be plenty pooling around the custards.

Serves 6