

Apricot Bread Pudding

Serves 16 using the All-Clad 9 by 13-inch Baker

Apricot Bread Pudding is a perfect dessert or brunch dish. Served warm, it has the richness of custard soaked brioche contrasted by the sweet and tart flavor of candied apricots and the crunch of toasted almonds. Of course, other dried or fresh fruits can be substituted for the apricots. If using fresh fruit, layer the fruit in the bread pudding, eliminating the fruit from the top layer.



Ingredients:

- About 12 (6 ounces) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- Candied Apricots (recipe below)
- One large Pullman loaf brioche, crusts removed
- 1 1/4 cups plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs

- 4 large egg yolks
- 2 3/4 cups whole milk
- 2 3/4 cups heavy cream
- 1 1/4 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup lightly toasted slivered almonds
- 1 1/2 tablespoons powdered sugar

Candied Apricots:

- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 12 ounces dried apricots

Instructions:

Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 325°F.

Brush the 9 by 13-inch baker with a light coating of butter. Coarsely chop half of the apricots and scatter 1/3 of the chopped apricots evenly in the bottom of the pan.

Cut a 9-inch piece of the brioche from the Pullman loaf. Slice the piece lengthwise into 8 slices. Lightly butter both sides of each slice. Arrange 4 of the slices in a solid layer of bread to cover the bottom of the pan, trimming the pieces as necessary to fit. Scatter another 1/3 of the chopped apricots over the bread. Top with another layer of brioche slices and the remaining chopped apricots.

Cut the remaining bread into 3/4-inch cubes. Place them in a large bowl. Melt the remaining butter and toss with the bread and 2 tablespoons of granulated sugar. Spread the cubes in the pan and arrange the whole glazed apricots among the bread cubes.

In a large bowl, whisk the eggs and yolks together.

Combine the milk, cream, remaining sugar and vanilla in a medium saucepan over

medium heat. Stir to dissolve the sugar and heat until it comes to a simmer. Remove from the heat, and slowly whisk into the egg mixture to combine. Place in a spouted container, such as a large measuring cup.

Pour the milk mixture evenly over the bread to reach three-quarters of the way up the bread. You may not use all of the custard. Let rest for 10 minutes.

Place the pudding in the oven and bake for 30 minutes. Toss the almonds with the powdered sugar. Sprinkle the top of the pudding with the almond mixture and return to the oven. Cook for another 30 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean and the top is a rich golden brown.

Remove the pudding from the oven, rest on a cooling rack. Heat the reserved apricot glaze, adding a tablespoon or so of water as needed and drizzle over the top of the pudding. Serve warm directly from the pan.

Candied Apricots:

Line a baking sheet with a Silpat or parchment paper.

Combine the water, honey, sugar, and lemon juice in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Stir in the apricots, cover, and simmer gently, for 10 minutes, until the apricots are tender, but still hold their shape.

Remove the lid and simmer, stirring constantly, for about 5 minutes until the liquid has thickened and the apricots are glazed. Place the apricots on the baking sheet and cool. Reserve any remaining glaze.