

My Mother's Crème Caramel

A French custard with a self-saucing caramel top that is ubiquitous in Egypt. This recipe is my mother's with a few of my tweaks. It differs from crème brûlée in that it is a liquid caramel instead of solid.

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Custard

- 4 cups + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole milk
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 6 eggs (room temp)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Caramel

- 1 cup sugar

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

Caramel

1. In a small saucepan dissolve sugar in water. Stir constantly over medium heat. Stop stirring once the sugar is dissolved.
2. Keep the syrup at a gentle boil until it reaches a dark rust color (approx 375°F). This will take about 10 minutes but you need to babysit it as it gets close to that temp as it can quickly burn.
3. With oven mitts on quickly pour the caramel into the casserole dish and rotate constantly to coat bottom and sides of the pan before it hardens. Cool completely.

Custard

1. In a medium saucepan warm the 4 cups of milk over low heat. Remove from heat just before boiling and immediately add sugar. Whisk to dissolve the sugar.
2. In a separate small bowl whisk the cornstarch into the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of milk then add to the hot milk mixture. Let cool until just warm to the touch. In the meantime, preheat the oven to 350°F.
3. Beat eggs and vanilla in a small bowl then add to cooled milk mixture. Run the mixture through a chinois or sieve at least twice to produce a smooth, homogenous custard.
4. Pour custard into caramel-coated dish. Place dish into deep roasting pan and add enough water to immerse the custard dish half-way. (Add the water while the pan is in the oven). Cover custard dish with wax paper or parchment.
5. Bake for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Remove from bain-marie (water bath),

remove the wax paper and let cool completely on a rack.

6. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.
7. To serve: loosen the sides with a dull knife. Have ready a serving dish that is 1" deep and wider than the casserole dish. Invert the serving dish over the casserole dish and, holding both tightly, flip them both over. The crème caramel should fall out of the casserole dish easily and self-sauce with the caramel. Keep refrigerated when not serving.