

My Mother Mary's Sicilian Cornstarch Pudding

1 quart whole milk

6 tablespoons cornstarch, very carefully measured

(take a portion of cornstarch out of the box)

Dip the tablespoon into the cornstarch and press the cornstarch into the spoon and level off.

3/4 cup of granulated sugar

1 vanilla bean, split and scraped into the milk

(optional)

2 cinnamon sticks, broken in half

2 - 3 teaspoons pure vanilla extract or to taste

Zest of one orange or zest of one lemon

2 or 3 slightly beaten large egg yolks

Take one cup of the milk portion and whisk the cornstarch into the milk to make a slurry.

Stir just before adding to the full portion of the milk.

Add sugar, vanilla bean, cinnamon sticks, zest of choice. Whisk till very smooth. If you like more flavor, let the mixture sit for 30 minutes before cooking.

Have your slightly beaten egg yolks ready in a small bowl.

Have a strainer ready, placed over a large bowl.

Cook over low-medium heat, stirring constantly until it starts to thicken. When it is thick enough, add a small portion to the egg yolks and whisk quickly.

Add to thickened pudding, lower the heat to a simmer, and stir until it comes back to a boil. Cook another 2 minutes or until thick enough. Be careful that it does not burn on the bottom of the pot.

Use the heaviest saucepan that you have. Strain carefully into a large bowl. Add the vanilla extract to taste. Taste for seasoning and correct if necessary.

Pour into a pretty serving container or Pyrex dish. Do not cover and refrigerate till cold. You can cover with plastic wrap, not touching the pudding, only when it is cold. Decorate with a good quality, semi-sweet chocolate, cut into little chunks or small morsels, only when ready to serve. Sprinkle with sifted powdered sugar if you like and a sprig of fresh mint.

Sicilian Cornstarch Pudding Trifle

Arrange in a glass bowl or make individual portions. Pour a little pudding into container,
now a layer of pound cake or sponge cake, now a little pudding, now a layer of fruit,

It
could be sliced ripe bananas, fresh strawberries, ripe sliced peaches, now a layer
of
pudding. Chill. When cold, cover.

Do Not Decorate with dark chocolate until serving.