

BOSTON CREAM PIE

If done properly, this is one of the all-time great deserts: Cake, pastry cream, and chocolate frosting are hard to beat! Historically, unfortunately, the cake is dry, the custard runny, and the frosting brittle. This recipe addresses all of those issues and I promise you, it will be well worth your time! I split up the ingredients for each separate component, so be sure you have *all* of the ingredients before you get started. Also, if you are planning on serving this to company, make it the day before; you don't want to rush this and it needs to cool and chill appropriately.

INGREDIENTS:

PASTRY CREAM:

2 Cups Half-and-Half
6 Large Egg Yolks
½ Cup (3 ½ ounces) Sugar
Pinch Salt
¼ Cup Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
4 Tablespoons cold Butter, cut into 4 pieces
1 ½ teaspoons Vanilla

Heat half-and-half in medium saucepan over medium heat until just simmering. While it is heating, whisk yolks, sugar, and salt in medium bowl until smooth. Add flour to yolk mixture and whisk until incorporated. Remove half-and-half from the heat and, whisking constantly, *slowly* add ½ Cup to yolk mixture to temper, then repeat 2 more times. Whisking constantly, return tempered yolk mixture to half-and-half in saucepan. The reason we are doing this is to avoid heating the egg mixture too quickly so we don't make scrambled eggs.

Return the saucepan to medium heat and cook, whisking constantly, until mixture thickens slightly, about 4-8 minutes or so, depending on how hot your stove is. It will be obvious that the mixture is thickening, so reduce heat to medium low, whisking constantly for about 6-8 minutes. If, when you stop whisking, bubbles burst on the surface, remove from heat. If no bubbles yet, keep whisking and check about every minute.

Once removed from heat, whisk in vanilla and butter until the butter is melted and incorporated. Strain the pastry cream through a fine-mesh strainer placed over a medium bowl. Use the back of a spoon to help push it through if necessary. Press a piece of lightly greased parchment paper or plastic wrap directly on the surface (this will prevent a skin from forming) and refrigerate until set, at least 2 hours and up to 24 hours.

CAKE:

1 ½ Cups (7 ½ ounces) Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
1 ½ teaspoons Baking Powder
¾ teaspoon Salt
¾ Cup Milk (whole milk is preferable if you have it, otherwise whatever you have will do)
6 Tablespoons Butter
1 ½ teaspoons Vanilla
3 Large Eggs
1 ½ Cups (10 ½ ounces) Sugar

Adjust the oven rack to the middle position and preheat to 325 degrees. Lightly grease two 9 inch cake pans with non-stick spray and line with parchment paper. Whisk flour, baking powder, and salt together in a medium bowl.

Heat milk and butter in a small saucepan over low heat until the butter is melted. Remove from heat, add the vanilla, and cover to keep warm.

In a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, whip eggs and sugar at high speed until light and airy, about 5 minutes. Remove mixer bowl from stand. Add hot milk mixture and whisk by hand until incorporated. Add dry ingredients and whisk until well incorporated.

Working quickly, divide batter evenly between the two pans. Bake until tops are light brown and a toothpick inserted in the center of the cakes comes out clean, 23 - 28 minutes.

Transfer cakes to wire rack and cool completely in pan, about 2 hours. Run a small plastic knife around the edge of the pans, then invert the cakes onto wire rack. Carefully remove the parchment paper from the cakes, then set cakes right side up on the racks.

TO ASSEMBLE:

Place 1 cake round on a large plate. Whisk the pastry cream briefly, then spoon onto the center of the cake. Spread evenly to the cakes edge. Place the second layer on the top making sure the edges line up properly. Press lightly on the top of the cake to level. Refrigerate cake while preparing the glaze.

GLAZE:

½ Cup Whipping Cream
2 Tablespoons Light Corn Syrup
4 ounces Bittersweet Chocolate, chopped finely

Bring the cream and corn syrup to simmer in small saucepan over medium heat. Once it begins to simmer, remove from heat and add chocolate. Whisk gently until smooth, about 30 seconds. Let stand, whisking occasionally, until thickened slightly, about 5 minutes.

Pour the glaze onto the center of the cake. Use a spatula to spread glaze to the edge of the cake, letting it drip decoratively down the sides. Chill finished cake 3 hours before slicing.