

## Desserts of the World: Italy

Presented April 16, 2019, by Sarah Newton

### Tiramisu

Raw egg and alcohol free

Adapted from [Cleobuttera.com](http://Cleobuttera.com)'s recipe



#### Ingredients for custard base:

- 1 cup milk, divided
- 1/4 cup plus 2 Tablespoons granulated sugar, divided
- 2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 large egg yolks
- 2 Tablespoons unsalted butter, cold and cut into small pieces
- 2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste or 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

#### Ingredients for cream filling:

- 1 recipe custard base (ingredients above & recipe below)
- 1 cup mascarpone cheese, cold
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream, cold
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar

#### Ingredients for espresso soaking syrup:

- 1½ cups of espresso or freshly brewed strong coffee (see note, below)\*
- 1 Tablespoon granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon of vanilla bean paste

#### Ingredients for cakey layer:

About 24 crisp ladyfingers (Savoirdi biscuits), more or less depending on their size

#### Ingredients for garnish:

- 4-6 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder, for dusting
- Plain chocolate of your choice, for making curls to garnish (optional)
- Plain or chocolate covered coffee beans, for garnish (optional)

#### Directions to make custard base (can be prepared several days in advance)

1. Have two saucepans ready, small and medium.
2. In a small saucepan, combine 3/4 cup plus 2 Tablespoons of the milk and 1/4 cup of the sugar.
3. Meanwhile, in a heatproof medium-size bowl, whisk together the remaining 2 Tablespoons of milk, 2 Tablespoons sugar, flour and egg yolks until very smooth and no lumps remain.
4. Place the saucepan over medium heat and bring the mixture to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat as soon as bubbles appear on the surface.
5. When the milk mixture comes to a simmer, gradually whisk it into the egg yolk mixture, in a thin and steady stream, pouring with one hand and whisking with the other.
6. Transfer this mixture into a clean medium-size saucepan and cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until bubbles appear at the surface. Continue cooking for about 10 more seconds until the mixture thickens. DO NOT OVERCOOK.

7. Immediately remove from heat and strain with a small-sieve strainer into a medium bowl. (This will remove lumps, though you could live dangerously and skip straining. I've done it both ways and no one noticed a difference.)
8. Whisk in the butter and vanilla bean, paste if using. Immediately cover the surface of the custard with plastic wrap to prevent a crust from forming. Refrigerate until thick and cold, about 1 hour or overnight. A freezer maybe used for quicker chilling.

### **Directions to make espresso soaking liquid**

\*The 1½ cups of espresso is easily made with instant espresso or instant coffee. Follow the directions on the package for making espresso. I've used both Delallo Instant and Medaglia Doro Instant; one required 4 Tablespoons and the other suggested 2 teaspoons.

1. While the custard is chilling, make the espresso. Taste it to make sure the flavor is bold. Weak espresso or coffee will weaken further when cooled (flavors get less intense once chilled), but you can add more instant coffee/espresso powder while hot.
2. Add 1 Tablespoon of sugar and the remaining vanilla bean paste. The sugar and vanilla help to offset the absence of alcohol in this dessert.
3. Let your espresso cool. This is important. Too hot and the coffee will soak more rapidly into the ladyfingers than you want.

### **Directions to make cream filling**

1. Pour the cold whipping cream into the bowl of a stand mixer (handheld mixer OK, too). Slowly add the sugar (if lumpy, sieve as you go), and beat at medium speed until frothy. Increase speed to high and continue to beat until cream holds stiff peaks. Set cream aside in another bowl.
2. In the mixer bowl, combine the cooled custard base and the mascarpone cheese until smooth, uniform and no lumps remain.
3. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold the whipped cream into the mascarpone mixture until no white streaks remain. Set mascarpone mixture aside.

### **Assemble the Tiramisu**

#### **To make in an 8-by-8-inch baking pan:**

1. No pan preparation required, unless using springform pan; line bottom with plastic wrap for easy release.
2. One ladyfinger at a time, quickly dip and roll 12 ladyfingers in the coffee mixture; letting excess drip. *(It's important to go quickly: do not submerge ladyfingers in the coffee mixture. The entire dipping/rolling should take no longer than 2 seconds for each cookie. Cookies should retain their shape well and not turn into mush.)*
3. Arrange dipped cookies in a single layer in the baking dish, breaking or trimming ladyfingers as needed to neatly fill the bottom of the dish.
4. Spread half the mascarpone mixture over the ladyfingers. Use a rubber spatula to spread mixture to the sides and corners. Smooth the surface.
5. Sprinkle entire layer with a dusting of cocoa powder (this is an important and delicious step).
6. Repeat dipping and arrangement of ladyfingers to create a second layer; spread remaining mascarpone mixture over ladyfingers. Use an offset spatula or the back of a knife to smooth the surface.
7. Spread top with whipped cream. If desired, you could whip another cup of cream and pipe it across the top with a pastry bag fitted with a large round tip.
8. Sprinkle your finished dessert with another layer of cocoa powder. Top with chocolate curls, if desired.

9. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 6 hours, preferably overnight. Serve with coffee beans as garnish, if desired.

### **Tips**

1. The fresher the custard milk, the earlier ahead you can make it.
2. If your custard base doesn't thicken as much as you'd hoped, it's OK. It will still work great for this recipe. The cream mixture will be softer and won't hold as well when you slice it, but it will be so tasty.
3. This dessert holds up well after a couple days in the fridge.
4. Double the recipe to create an impressive four-layer dessert or to make it a 9-by-13-inch pan.