



Verjuice custards with Bergamot-braised raisin clusters

By Maggie Beer

40 minutes

Preparation time

1 hour 10 minutes

Cooking time

6 servings

Serves

INGREDIENTS

350ml thickened cream
1 sprig rosemary or bay leaf,
crushed
1½ cups (375 ml) verjuice
100g caster sugar
2×55g eggs
5–6 egg yolks (you need 100g egg
yolk)

Bergamot-braised raisin clusters

250g Muscatel raisins on stems
125g caster sugar
2g Earl Grey tea leaves

METHOD

1. Place six 125ml dariole moulds onto a perforated steam tray.
2. Place the cream, rosemary sprig or bay leaf and sugar in a small saucepan over medium heat and bring to simmering point, stirring to ensure the sugar is dissolved. Remove from the heat and leave to infuse for 10 minutes. Bring the verjuice to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium heat and cook for 7 minutes or until reduced by almost half; do not let it boil. Set aside and keep warm.
3. Remove and discard the rosemary or bay leaf from the cream.
4. Place the eggs, egg yolks in a mixing bowl and whisk gently to just combine; take care not to incorporate too much air. Whisking continuously, add the warm verjuice in a slow, steady, thin stream until incorporated. Still whisking continuously, add the hot cream in a slow, steady, thin stream until incorporated.
5. Gently pour the mixture evenly into the moulds through a small fine-meshed sieve to eliminate any air bubbles then place a lid on the moulds or cover with cling film if you do not have lids.
6. Place the into the steam oven, Steam at 85°C for 35 minutes. To test, press the surface lightly with a fingertip; the custard should feel set but not firm. Remove from the steam oven and refrigerate overnight.

Raisin clusters

1. Place the raisins in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Set aside to plump for 45 minutes.
2. Place the sugar and 1½ cups (375 ml) of water in a small saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Simmer until reduced to ½ cup (125 ml), then set aside.
3. Meanwhile, place the tea in a small heatproof bowl or jug and pour over ¼ cup (60 ml) boiling water, then leave to infuse for 5 minutes. Strain through a fine-meshed sieve into the pan of sugar syrup.
4. Drain the raisins and add to the pan, then place over medium heat and cook for 1 minute, stirring gently to coat the raisins in syrup. Remove from the heat and cool to room temperature, then divide into 12 clusters.

To serve

1. To turn out the custards, use your fingertip to gently press around the edge to break the seal. Invert each mould over a small plate, then squeeze a little so the custard releases and drops gently onto the plate.
2. Place a raisin cluster to the side, spoon over a little syrup and serve.

Hints and tips

- The custard can be cooked in 125ml ceramic ramekins or tea cups if desired. With this method there is no need to invert the custards, simply top with raisins and serve.