

Spiced Banana Ice Cream

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bluestem, Kansas City, MO

Missy Johnson of Fairway, Kansas, writes: "My husband and I had a wonderful spiced banana ice cream at bluestem, in Kansas City, Missouri. Do you think the pastry chef would share the recipe?"

Yield: Makes 1 quart
active time: 30 min total time: 4 hr (includes freezing)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
- 1 whole star anise or 1/2 teaspoon star anise pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper
- 1/4 vanilla bean, halved lengthwise
- 1/2 cup coarsely mashed ripe banana (1 medium)
- 6 large egg yolks

Special equipment: an instant-read thermometer; an ice cream maker

Preparation

Stir together cream, milk, brown sugar, cinnamon stick, star anise, nutmeg, cardamom, white pepper, and a pinch of salt in a 2- to 3-quart heavy saucepan. Scrape seeds from vanilla bean into cream mixture, then add pod. Purée banana in a food processor, then whisk into cream mixture. Bring just to a boil, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, 30 minutes.

Return to a boil, uncovered. Meanwhile, whisk together yolks in a large metal bowl. Add boiling-hot cream mixture in a slow stream, whisking constantly, then pour into saucepan. Cook over moderately low heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until custard is thick enough to coat back of spoon and registers 170 to 175°F on thermometer (do not let boil). Remove from heat and force custard through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean metal bowl, discarding solids. Set bowl in a larger bowl of ice water and let stand, stirring occasionally, until cold, about 30 minutes.

Freeze custard in ice cream maker, then transfer to an airtight container and harden in freezer, about 1 hour. Let soften in refrigerator 1 to 1 1/2 hours and then at room temperature 10 minutes.

Cooks' notes: · Custard can be chilled in refrigerator up to 24 hours. · Ice cream keeps 1 week.

