

Christmas Trifle

Custard Cream:

2 ½ cups milk
½ cup sugar
3 Tbsp cornstarch
5 egg yolks
1 Tbsp vanilla
2 cups heavy cream
¼ cup confectioners' sugar

Trifle:

1 ½ lbs vanilla or lemon pound cake, sliced ½-inch thick
1 cup raspberry jam
4 oz dry sherry
10 kiwifruit, peeled and cut into 1/8-inch slices, reserving several slices
for decoration
24-oz container pineapple or mango, drained and cut in chunks
Two 10-oz containers frozen strawberries with their juices, thawed
¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted, for decoration

Make the custard: Heat the milk in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until barely simmering.

Separately, mix the granulated sugar, cornstarch and egg yolks with a pinch of salt in a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan, and heat over medium heat.

Whisk in the hot milk slowly, about ½ cup at a time, until all the milk is incorporated into the egg mixture. Stir constantly with a wooden spoon and cook for 12-16 minutes, or until lumps of custard begin to form. Lower the heat and whisk until smooth.

Remove from heat and mix in the vanilla.

Transfer the custard to a large bowl. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap, poke a few holes in the plastic, and cool.

Place the heavy cream and confectioners' sugar in a medium mixing bowl. Whip on medium speed for 4-5 minutes, or until stiff peaks form, and refrigerate. Reserve 2 Tbsp of whipped cream for decoration.

Once the custard has cooled, mix in one-third of the whipped cream with the custard using a rubber spatula to lighten. Gently fold in the remaining whipped cream and refrigerate.

Make the trifle: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Lay the pound cake on baking sheets and bake about 10 minutes, or until partially dried. Remove from the oven and cool. Spread each slice with a thin layer of raspberry jam.

Place a layer of pound cake slices, breaking them to fit evenly, into an 8-inch-deep trifle bowl, or 3-qt glass bowl. Drizzle one-third of the sherry onto the pound cake.

Line the edge of the bowl with the kiwifruit, leaving a slight gap between each slice. Fill in the gaps with chunks of pineapple. Spoon on one-third of the strawberries with their juices, making some visible through the kiwifruit.

Add additional kiwifruit, pineapple and strawberries to level out the layer. Add in and spread evenly one-third of the custard cream. Repeat this layering process twice, ending with a layer of custard cream on top. Decorate with the reserved whipped cream, kiwifruit, strawberry, and the toasted almonds.

For individual portions, layer the glasses proportionately and decorate each serving.