

Custard with Caramel – *Flan*

Ingredients (for about 2 1/2 cups)

3	eggs
1 ½ cups	milk
¼ cup	sugar
1 tsp	vanilla

Caramel:

1 tsp	butter
¼ cup	sugar

Prepare caramel in mould if it is stove-top proof (otherwise prepare in a saucepan and then very carefully pour into mould.) Place butter and sugar in mould (or pan) over medium heat; stir to incorporate, but stop stirring as soon as the sugar starts to melt. Allow to continue melting and cooking until it caramelizes, then spread over the bottom of the mould. Set over pot with hot water in double boiler (steam cooking) or for a water bath, inside a bigger pot with hot water. In a bowl or plastic pitcher, mix eggs, milk, sugar and vanilla until sugar dissolves. Pour through a strainer over caramel in prepared mould. Cover and cook for 40-45 minutes (see note below for methods), checking that water is boiling gently and does not evaporate completely (add more hot water if needed). The flan is ready when a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Remove from heat and allow to cool down for at least 20 minutes. Loosen flan from sides of the mould by pressing gently with two fingers, or running a knife very carefully around the edge. Place a serving plate, upside-down, on top of the mould, then flip them over together, to catch the flan, caramel side up, on the serving plate. Store in the refrigerator for at least one hour, and up to three days. This recipe may be doubled for a taller slice, just adjust to a longer cooking time. This is a convenient and delicious choice for a make-ahead dessert, ready to serve:



A note on cooking method: A double boiler consists of two pots; one holds hot water and is placed on the stove, and the second fits tightly on top, containing the food (in this case custard). The key is not to fill the bottom pot too high, so the water does not touch the top pot, and the food is cooked very gently and slowly with the heat from the steam and hot air between the two pots. Another method is using a water bath, by placing the mould with the custard, tightly covered with foil, inside a bigger pot or mould filled with hot water, then either cook on the stove with the large pot covered, or in the oven at 350°F (180°C).