

Cheesecake Flan

6 SERVINGS

This unusual flan was invented by Ampudia's mother, Marilyn Chasan.

- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice**
- 3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons softened cream cheese (7 ounces)**
- 3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons sweetened condensed milk**
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons evaporated milk**
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons half-and-half**
- 3 large eggs**
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract**

Boiling water

Whipped cream and fresh berries, for serving

1. Preheat the oven to 275°. In a small, heavy saucepan, combine the sugar and lemon juice and cook over moderately low heat until an amber caramel forms, 6 to 8 minutes. Immediately pour the hot caramel into six 1-cup ramekins, swirling them to coat the bottoms.

2. In a blender, combine the cream cheese with the condensed and evaporated milks, half-and-half, eggs and vanilla and blend on medium speed until smooth. Refrigerate the custard for 10 minutes, skim off the foam and pour the custard into the prepared ramekins.

3. Set the ramekins in a small roasting pan; add enough boiling water to reach halfway up the side of the ramekins. Bake the flans for about 1 1/2 hours or until they are set and a toothpick inserted in the centers come out almost clean. Remove the ramekins from the water bath and let cool, then refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight before serving.

4. To unmold each flan, set the bottom of the ramekin in a pan of hot water for about 1 minute. Run a thin blade around the edge of the flan and cover with a plate. Invert the plate and shake once or twice; the flan should release easily. Serve with whipped cream and berries. ■

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