

# Cleo Coyle's Creamy Egg Custard

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*Baked egg custard is a wonderfully satisfying comfort food that I've been eating since my mother made it for me as a child. I've baked it countless times since and am happy to share two tips I've learned for producing a lovely custard with a smooth top and creamy texture.*

**(1)** Use room temperature eggs. Simply warm them quickly in a bowl of warm water from the tap. This will help loosen the albumin (protein) in the egg and make it easier for you to properly blend the custard. **(2)** Bake it low and slow and do not put foil on top of the custard cups or the roasting pan (as some recipes suggest). On page 2 of this recipe, I'll show you what happens if you try to speed up the baking with a higher temperature or foil on top. So here you go. Comfort in a cup from me to you, with a bit of nutmeg sprinkled on top. ~ Cleo

Servings: 4 (in 4-ounce size ramekins or custard cups)

## **Ingredients:**

1-1/4 cups whole milk  
3 large eggs, room temperature  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup confectioners' (powdered) sugar, sifted

## **Directions:**

Whisk together all ingredients until well blended and pour into 4 four-ounce size ramekins or custard cups. Place cups in a roasting pan or baking dish and create a shallow water bath by filling just enough to reach halfway up the sides of the cups. Bake uncovered in a preheated 325° F. oven for 1 hour and 5 minutes. The time may be a little longer or shorter, depending on your oven.



**When is it done?** You are looking for the top to set. The custard may still jiggle slightly, but the top should no longer be liquid. It should feel firm (spongy but set) when lightly touched. And when a toothpick or skewer is inserted down into the custard at the edge of the cup, it should come out clean. Otherwise, keep baking and checking.

**Remove from oven:** Take the cups out of the water bath, and allow them to cool for one hour on a rack.

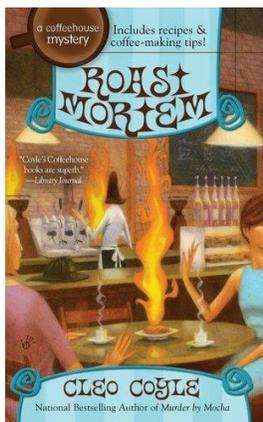
**Serve and store:** Eat the freshly baked custard at once or chill by placing plastic wrap over the top of each cup and storing in the refrigerator. (The plastic prevents a thick skin from forming on top of the custard.)



## Baking tips...

To the left is what happens if you follow this recipe and bake the custard (uncovered) in a water bath at 325° F. for 1 hour and 5 minutes.

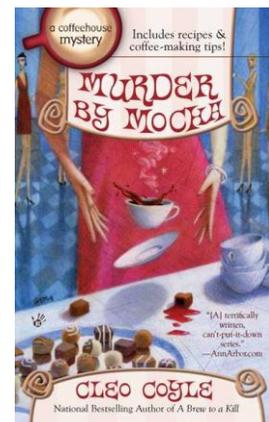
To the right is what happens if you try to rush the process of baking by raising the oven temperature or covering the pan with foil. Do you see those unsightly pockmarks on top of the custard? That comes from the custard boiling instead of cooking slowly. In the batch at the right, I sealed aluminum foil over the roasting pan. Yes, this sped up the cooking time, but it also made the custard boil, creating less silky results.



*Eat with Joy! ~ Cleo Coyle,  
author of the Coffeehouse Mysteries*

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