Individual Cherry Clafoutis with (or without) Kirsch

A recipe by the former executive chef of the VS Orient Express, Christian Bodiguel, slightly adapted by author Cleo Coyle. Intro text and photos © by Alice Alfonsi who writes The Coffeehouse Mysteries as Cleo Coyle with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

I have no doubt that a trip on the Orient Express is on plenty of bucket lists out there. It's certainly on mine. The original train, of course, is defunct, but the Venice-Simplon Orient Express (VSOE) is a beautiful re-creation, a rolling museum that uses gorgeously restored carriages from the original line, dating back to the 1920s and 30s. Today's passengers enjoy European cuisine that is fresh and local with ingredients that are taken on board at stops along the route. A few years ago, the train's executive chef at the time (Christian Bodiguel) shared a version of this dessert recipe online. I've slightly adapted it. This classic French dessert originated from the Limousin region of France. Chef Bodiguel described it as one of his favorites. And if you don't have fresh cherries available, you can substitute frozen. Though not traditional (in an American pinch), you can even substitute blueberries, blackberries, or raspberries. May you eat (and travel) with joy!

~ ***Cleo Coyle***, author of The Coffeehouse Mysteries

INGREDIENTS:

1 to 1-1/2 cups whole sweet cherries*
Softened butter for greasing ramekins
1 large egg + 2 large egg yolks
3 Tablespoons + 1 teaspoon whole milk
4 teaspoons heavy cream
2 teaspoons kirsch*
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 Tablespoon + 1-1/2 teaspoons melted (and cooled) butter (for batter)
1/3 cup powdered sugar
3 Tablespoons all-purpose flour

*Ingredient substitution notes.

(1) CHERRIES: Fresh is best, but out of season, you can substitute frozen cherries. Place them in a colander, run hot tap water over them briefly and drain well before proceeding. Though not traditional (in an American pinch) you can substitute blueberries, blackberries, or raspberries.

(2) KIRSCH: Kirsch is a strong, clear, cherry brandy. If you don't have kirsch on hand, substitute another brandy, or white rum. If you'd rather not use alcohol, substitute cherry juice.

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DIRECTIONS: Preheat the oven to 300 degrees Fahrenheit and generously butter four 4-ounce ramekins or other small oven-proof cups. De-stem the cherries and remove their pits. Roughly chop them. Divide the cherries into the four buttered ramekins or oven-proof serving bowls.

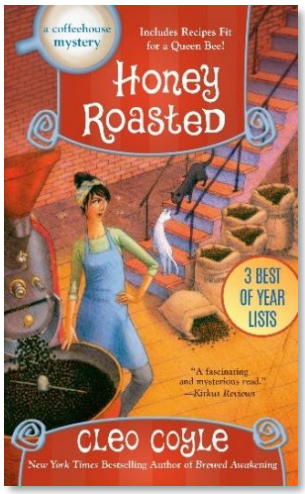
In a mixing bowl, whisk up the egg, and egg yolks. Add the milk, cream, kirsch (or substitute), and vanilla, and whisk well. Whisk in the melted (and cooled) butter. Now whisk in the powdered sugar, making sure it's fully dissolved. Finally, whisk in the flour. The batter will be loose.

Divide the batter up evenly among the four ramekins, pouring it as you see in my photo (right). > > >

Place the ramekins directly on the oven rack. Bake for about 30 minutes. Serve lukewarm with sweetened whipped cream, a scoop of ice cream, or even a dollop of cream cheese frosting, and...

Eat with joy! ~ Cleo

The Coffeehouse Mysteries are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes.
To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle's online coffeehouse at www.CoffeehouseMystery.com
And her recipe blog at www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com



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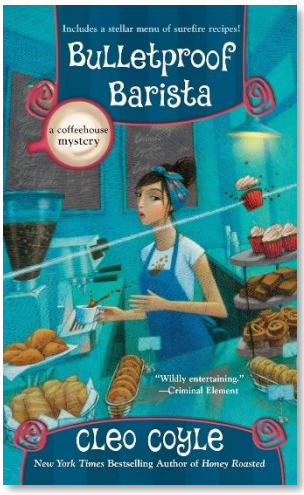

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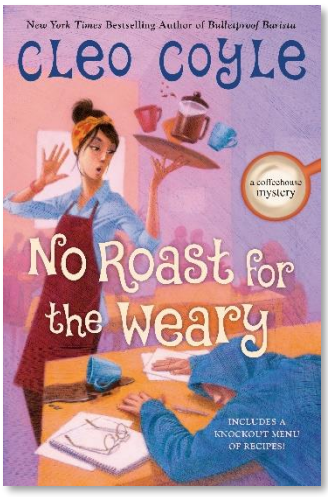

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