

Cleo Coyle's Warm Winter Custard with Vanilla & Nutmeg

Text and photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi who writes [The Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

Baked egg custard is a blissfully satisfying comfort food that I have been eating ever since my mother made it for me as a child. I've made it countless times since, and I'm happy to share two tips I learned along the way for producing a rich, smooth custard with a wonderfully 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). At the end of this recipe, I will show you a picture of what happens if you try to speed up the baking with a higher temperature or foil on top.

So here you go. Warm comfort in a cup from me to you, with a bit of nutmeg on top...

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

Ingredients:

1-1/4 cups whole milk

3 large eggs

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar

Directions

Step 1: Whisk together all ingredients. I do this in a large measuring cup because the spout makes it easy to pour in the next step.

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Step 2: Pour the liquid mixture into 4 four-ounce size ramekins or custard cups, dividing evenly. Place the ramekins in a roasting pan or baking dish and create a shallow water bath by filling just enough to reach halfway up the sides of your ramekins or custard cups.

Step 3: Bake 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. It may still jiggle slightly, but it should be firm to a light touch 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 and water bath and allow to cool for one hour on rack. Eat at once or chill by placing plastic wrap over the top of each cup. (You need the plastic on there to prevent a skin from forming.)

A few final recipe tips...

The photo at right is what happens if you follow this recipe >> & bake the custard (uncovered) in a water bath at 325° F. for 1 hour and 5 minutes. Creamy delicious custard.

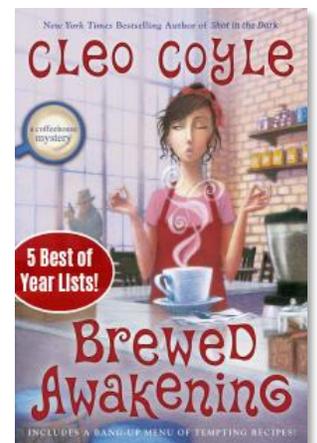
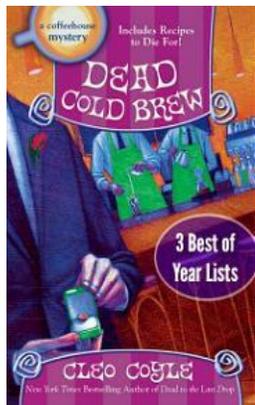


<< The photo at left is what happens if you try to rush the process of baking by raising the oven temperature or covering the pan with foil. Do you see those unsightly pockmarks on the top of the custard? That comes from the custard boiling instead of cooking slowly. In the batch below, I purposely sealed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

Finally, allow the custard to cool for an hour after removing from the oven. If you chill or store in the fridge, be sure to seal plastic wrap over the top of the cups to prevent a skin from forming.

Eat with joy! ~ Cleo

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