

COCONUT CUSTARD

MAKES ABOUT 4 CUPS

Coconut custard just sings summertime dessert to me. This custard recipe is so simple to make, but the applications for it can be endless. Sometimes I'll use this custard as a cake filling or I'll set it with a bit of gelatin (see Chef It Up!) and serve it as a molded dessert.

- 1 cup half-and-half
- 1 can (14 ounces) coconut milk
- 5 large egg yolks
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon coconut-flavored rum
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- Pinch of kosher salt

In a medium saucepan, combine the half-and-half and coconut milk and bring to a boil.

While the mixture is heating, in a small bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, sugar, and cornstarch.

Temper the egg yolk mixture by gradually whisking in the hot cream mixture. Pour the entire mixture back into the pan and cook over medium heat until thick and creamy, about 5 minutes.

Take the custard off the heat and stir in the butter, rum, vanilla, and salt. Transfer to a bowl set into an ice bath (a larger bowl of ice and water) and set aside to chill.

chef it up!

To make little molded desserts with the custard, soften 1 envelope ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce) unflavored powdered gelatin in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold water. Stir the softened gelatin into the hot custard to dissolve. Spoon the custard into eight 4-ounce ramekins and refrigerate for at least 4 hours to set. Sprinkle the tops of the custard with granulated sugar (about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick). Torch the top with a crème brûlée torch until a medium-gold color. Serve topped with Blueberry Compote (opposite page).