

PAVLOVA WITH LEMON CURD AND BERRIES

Yield: 8-10 servings

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes + cooling

INGREDIENTS

For Meringue

- 1 cup super-fine granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 3 large egg whites, at room temperature for 30 minutes
- 3 tablespoons cold water
- 1 teaspoon distilled vinegar

For the Lemon Curd

- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1/8 teaspoon (a pinch) salt
- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 stick unsalted butter
- 3 large egg yolks
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 4 cups mixed berries

DIRECTIONS

Meringue

Preheat oven to 300 degrees, with rack in the middle. Trace a circle, approximately 7 inches in diameter, on a sheet of parchment paper. Turn parchment paper over and place on a baking sheet.

Whisk together sugar and cornstarch. With an electric mixer, beat egg whites and salt at medium speed until whites hold a soft peak. Add water (to loosen whites) and beat until whites hold a soft peak again. Increase speed to medium-high and beat in sugar mixture 1 tablespoon at a time. After all the sugar has been added, beat for an additional minute.

Add vinegar and beat at high speed until meringue is glossy and holds a stiff peak, about 5 minutes. Gently spread meringue inside the circle on the parchment, making the edge slightly higher than the center, to form a "crater." Bake until meringue is pale golden and crusty, about 45 minutes. Turn off oven and prop door open slightly with a wooden spoon. Cool meringue in oven for 1 hour.

Lemon Curd

While meringue bakes, stir together sugar, cornstarch and salt in a heavy 2-quart saucepan; add lemon juice and butter. Bring to a simmer over medium heat; continue to simmer, whisking constantly, 1 minute. Lightly beat egg yolks in a small bowl, then whisk 1/4 cup of warm lemon juice mixture. Mix egg yolk-lemon mixture to lemon mixture in the saucepan. Reduce heat to low and cook, whisking constantly, until curd is thickened, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and stir in zest. Cover surface of curd with parchment paper and chill until cool, about 1-1/2 hours.

Assembling the Pavlova

Beat heavy cream until it just holds stiff peaks 8 - 10 minutes - then fold 1/4 cup beaten cream into curd to lighten it. Spoon lemon curd into meringue and mound berries on top.

Beat the 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar into remaining whipped cream and serve on the side.

NOTES

Recipe amounts can be multiplied by 3 to make 50 individual 3 inch Pavlovas and filling.