Refreshing Lime Flan Paired with Melon Puree

By Susie Iventosch

Tuscan melons are my favorite kind of melon, and usually I've only found good ripe ones during the summer months at farmers' markets. But Trader Joe's had an entire crate devoted to these beautifully ripe melons the other day. I picked up two of them, and began working backward to come up with a dessert recipe that would be delicious, light and pretty on the plate. Because lime goes so well with both melon and papaya, the idea of lime flan and lime curd seemed like a great pairing with the melon. The lime flavor in the flan is very subtle, but the lime curd is more concentrated and adds the extra lime punch!

If you can't find Tuscan melons, just use your favorite melon, or whatever you find in season, and it will be just as tasty, I'm sure!

Lime Flan with Melon Puree, Lime Curd and Fresh Fruit

Photo Susie Iventosch

(Six Servings)

Lime Flan
1 1/2 cups sugar, separated
2 cups whole milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
dash of sea salt
1 teaspoon lime zest
2 eggs
2 egg yolks
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

Spray the bottoms and sides of six ramekins with cooking spray. Preheat oven to 350 F.

Place 1 cup of the sugar in a sauce pot. Over medium heat, melt sugar and cook, stirring constantly, until golden brown and beginning to candy. Remove from heat, and immediately spoon into the bottom of six ramekins. Swirl ramekins to try to cover the bottom with the caramelized sugar. This will harden on the bottom of the ramekin. (Don't worry, it becomes syrupy again when baking the flan.)

Place ramekins in a baking dish and fill baking dish with water halfway up the sides of the ramekins.

In a bowl, beat eggs and egg yolks together. Set aside.

In a separate pot, heat milk, sugar, salt, vanilla and lime zest. Heat over medium-high until scalding and just beginning to boil.

Slowly pour hot milk mixture into eggs, whisking until well integrated. Stir in lime juice. Pour custard over the candied sugar in the ramekins.

Bake for approximately 40 to 45 minutes, or until a knife inserted at the edge of the dish easily separates custard from the ramekin. Remove from water bath and cool completely. Once cooled, refrigerate flans for several hours or overnight.

Lime Curd
2 eggs
6 tablespoons lime juice
6 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon lime zest

Place all ingredients into a saucepan and whisk together well. Cook over medium-high heat, until mixture thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon, approximately 5 minutes. Stir all the while to prevent lumps from occurring. Remove from heat and transfer into a bowl. Place plastic wrap directly onto the curd and cool completely. Refrigerate to store.

Melon Puree
1 Tuscan melon (or your favorite melon is fine)

Cut approximately 1 cup of ripe Tuscan melon from rind. Place in food processor and puree until smooth. Set aside.

Garnish
Melon slices
Papaya slices
Raspberries
Thinly sliced lime

DIRECTIONS

When ready to serve, loosen flan from edges of ramekins and invert onto serving plates, scraping the browned sugar sauce over the flan. Spoon lime curd over the top and garnish with a twisted lime slice. Spoon melon puree onto plate and garnish plate with raspberries and sliced fruit.

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net.
Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. **This recipe can be found on our website:** www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.

2015 Saint Mary's Graduation Day

Cool temps don't dampen graduates' spirits

By Cathy Dausman

Saint Mary's College president James A. Donahue with commencement speaker, Chris Matthews, at the podium.   Photos Cathy Dausman

It was sweater weather May 23 when more than 700 Saint Mary's College students received their undergraduate degrees during an outdoor stadium ceremony as parents, family, friends, college staff and dignitaries looked on.

Andrew Nguyen, 22, who received his diploma from the college's Integral Program, was selected as class valedictorian. He follows in the footsteps of his Vietnamese grandfather, a teacher who founded a school in Saigon, by enrolling in a University of Notre Dame graduate teaching program that begins this summer.

Political analyst and MSNBC talk show host Chris Matthews prepared the graduates to meet the first hardball life tosses their way when "you don't know what's coming next."

The former San Francisco Examiner columnist, speechwriter to the president of the United States and Washington D.C. bureau chief chronicled his long list of jobs for the new grads, starting with his days as altar boy and paperboy. Although Matthews admitted he was initially "terrified of public speaking," from high school he knew he wanted to "argue politics" as a living.

"It's not who you know, but who you get to know," he said, urging graduates to "never say no to yourself," and to start work by simply showing up.

Many of the new graduates continued their celebration with a catered meal under a sea of white canopies on the college grounds, a proud Saint Mary's tradition.

Approximately 500 post-baccalaureate degrees were conferred May 24 at the same site. Two of those graduates, Lamorinda Weekly contributing writers Amanda Kuehn Carroll and Ryan McKinley, earned their MFA degrees from the SMC Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing Program.

To date, more than 350 students have received degrees from the MFA program at Saint Mary's College, according to the SMC website. Alumni have published numerous books and have had work published in numerous journals and periodicals, and they've also won many distinguished literary prizes.

Information technology executive Monika Fahlbusch, senior vice president and chief people and administrative officer for the $2 billion firm BMC Software and a Saint Mary's alum, gave the graduate and professional programs commencement address on May 24.

Smiling SMC graduates queue up May 23 to receive their diplomas.