



VANILLA SLICE

INGREDIENTS

- 500 ml (2 cups) full cream milk
- 130 g (4.6 oz) caster sugar
- 6 egg yolks
- 1 vanilla bean (fresh)
- 1 or 2 tbsp of rum or liquor of your choice
- 40 g (1.4 oz) plain flour
- 30 g (1 oz) corn flour (corn starch)
- 1 roll of store bought (or home made) puff pastry
- Some icing sugar to decorate at the end

Cooking time: around 15 minutes at 200 °C (around 400 °F).

NOTES

- Ideally preheat your oven and cut the pastry rectangle before starting.
- Start by making the pastry cream, then let it cool while you cook the pastry. You can use pastry cream as soon as it is below room temperature. If you want, you can cook pastry sheet and make pastry cream beforehand and assemble the vanilla slice later but note that pastry cream loses its flavour very quickly, usually within 24 hours.

PROCEDURE

1. Preheat the oven (fan forced) to 200 °C (around 400 °F).
2. Pour the milk into a saucepan, add 1 or 2 tablespoons of sugar, the seeds and the seeded pod of the vanilla bean. After stirring well, bring the mixture barely to a boil on a low to medium heat.
3. Whilst the saucepan is heating, whisk 6 egg yolks and 100 grams of caster sugar in a bowl for 1 to 2 minutes until the yolks pale. Sieve flour in and gently whisk. Add sieved corn flour (cornstarch) and whisk in.
4. Pass about half of the milk through a sieve into the bowl and incorporate into the mixture by whisking. When done, sieve the rest of the milk in and whisk again until incorporated.
5. Sieve the milk mixture back into the pan and whisk on medium heat until it thickens. Then reduce the heat and continue heating until it slowly comes to the boil. Continue whisking for another 1 ½ minutes, after boiling starts. Turn off the heat.
6. Pour the pastry cream into a cold tray, and cover with cling wrap (ensuring that the wrap touches the pastry cream). Place into a freezer for a short while and then into the fridge whilst the pastry is made. The cream needs to be cold.
7. Cut 2 rectangular or square pastry shapes of equal size and place on a pastry tray. Pierce each sheet well with a fork. Sprinkle caster sugar finely on top. Weigh down the pastry to ensure it doesn't rise and cook in the oven for 15 – 20 minutes until the pastry is golden.
8. Return the cooled pastry cream into the bowl and add (if desired) some rum, Cointreau or Grand Marnier etc., and whisk in.
9. Place sufficient pastry cream on one of the cooked pastry sheets and spread evenly over the sheet. Place the other sheet on top and gently push down. With a knife, trim off each of the sides to give a flat edge.
10. Cut the filled pastry into desired widths and sprinkle with icing sugar on top. Eat straight after the sugar has been sprinkled.