

Old-Fashioned Banana Pudding with Classic Meringue

Old-Fashioned Banana Pudding



TIME
8 min

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INGREDIENTS

4 fresh bananas, peeled and sliced (ripe but still firm is ideal)
Approximately 1 box Vanilla wafers (Nilla Wafers work perfectly)
3/4 cup sugar (for the pudding)
1/4 teaspoon salt (for the pudding)
1/4 cup all-purpose flour (for thickening pudding)
3 cups PET milk (evaporated milk, or whole milk for a lighter custard)
4 egg yolks (reserved from meringue eggs)
A small pat of butter (about 1 tablespoon)
1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring (for the pudding)
4 egg whites (reserved from pudding yolks)
1/2 cup sugar (for the meringue)
1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring (for the meringue)
Pinch of cream of tartar (helps stabilize egg whites)

Swaps and Notes:

Bananas: Use ripe bananas with brown speckles, but not overly mushy, so they hold their shape when sliced. Slice them right before assembling to prevent browning.

Vanilla Wafers: Nilla Wafers are the classic choice, but any plain vanilla cookie or even shortbread cookies could work.

PET Milk (Evaporated Milk): This is traditional for a rich, creamy custard. Whole milk can be

substituted for a slightly lighter pudding, but the richness will be different. Do not use sweetened condensed milk.

Egg Yolks: These provide richness and act as a thickener for the custard. Make sure to separate them carefully from the whites.

Butter (Pudding): A small pat of butter adds a touch of richness and gloss to the cooked custard.

Vanilla Flavoring: Pure vanilla extract is always best for both the pudding and meringue.

Meringue: Cream of tartar is important for stabilizing the egg whites, helping them whip up to stiff peaks. Ensure your bowl and beaters are impeccably clean and grease-free for successful meringue.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Creating this :** Old-Fashioned Banana Pudding involves making the custard, layering, and then topping with a beautiful meringue.
2. **Prepare :** Layers: In a medium bowl, slice the 4 fresh bananas. Set aside. In a 2-quart casserole dish (a 9x13 inch baking dish works too for a larger, shallower pudding), arrange a single layer of vanilla wafers on the bottom. Top this with a layer of the sliced bananas.
3. **Make the :** Custard: In a medium saucepan on the stovetop, whisk together the 3/4 cup sugar, 1/4 teaspoon salt, 1/4 cup all-purpose flour, 3 cups PET milk, 4 egg yolks, and the small pat of butter. Place the saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring continuously with a whisk, for about 8 minutes until the mixture thickens significantly to a rich, pudding-like consistency. It should coat the back of a spoon.
4. **Cool :** Pudding: Remove the saucepan from the stove. Stir in 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring. Allow the pudding mixture to cool for about 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, to prevent the bananas from cooking when layered.
5. **Assemble :** Pudding Layers: Pour a portion of the cooled pudding mixture over the layer of vanilla wafers and bananas in the casserole dish. Continue to create layers: add another layer of vanilla wafers, then sliced bananas, and then more pudding. Repeat until you run out of ingredients, finishing with a layer of pudding.
6. **Instructions for :** Meringue: While the pudding layers are setting slightly, prepare the meringue. In a

clean, dry large mixing bowl, beat the 4 egg whites and a pinch of cream of tartar on high speed with an electric mixer until they become stiff and glossy, and firm peaks form when you lift the beaters. Gradually add the 1/2 cup sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring to the egg whites, continuing to beat on high speed until the sugar is fully dissolved and the meringue is thick, glossy, and holds very stiff peaks.

7. **Top & : Broil:** Gently spread the prepared meringue over the top layer of the banana pudding, ensuring it touches the edges of the dish to create a seal (this helps prevent shrinking). Place the casserole dish under your oven's broiler (monitor very carefully!) for about 2-3 minutes, or until the meringue turns a beautiful golden brown on top.
8. **Serve:** Remove from broiler. Serve warm for a comforting treat, or allow to cool completely and then chill in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours (or overnight) for a firmer, set pudding.

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