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CHOCOLATE BANANAS FOSTER FRENCH TOAST

Recipe courtesy of Lish Steiling of The Taste Curators

Ingredients

For the mascarpone whip:

- 1/4 cup mascarpone cheese, chilled*
- 1 cup heavy cream, chilled*
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar*
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract or paste*
- Pinch of kosher salt*

For the bananas foster:

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, such as Kerrygold*
- 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar*
- Pinch of kosher salt*
- 1/4 cup dark rum, such as Myer's Original Dark*
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon*
- 2 large ripe-ish bananas*

For the French toast:

- 8 (3/4-inch thick) slices pain de mie, brioche or nice white bread*
- 5 ounces (about 1 cup) dark chocolate, such as Valrhona 70% feves*
- 6 large eggs, at room temperature*
- 2 cups half-and-half, at room temperature*
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract or paste*
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt*
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, such as Kerrygold*
- Feuilletine, to garnish, if desired*

Method

For the mascarpone whipped cream, in a large bowl, combine the mascarpone cheese, heavy cream, sugar, vanilla and salt. Using a large whisk, whisk the mixture, starting slow to combine and working your way to vigorously, until soft peaks form, about 4 minutes. Be careful not to over whip. Cover and reserve in the refrigerator until ready to use.

For the bananas foster, heat a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add the butter to the pan along with the brown sugar and salt and stir to combine. Cook the mixture, stirring often with a heat-resistant spatula, until it forms a smooth caramel. Remove the pan from the heat and add the rum. Return the pan to the heat, tilting it slightly toward the flame to ignite the alcohol. Allow the flame to burn down. Add the cinnamon and sliced bananas and stir to combine.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Arrange the bread slices on a rimmed baking sheet and bake until slightly dry but not toasted, about 5 minutes. Allow to cool to room temperature.





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Method

Place the chocolate in the top of a double boiler over medium-heat and cook, stirring often until fully melted, about 5 minutes. Remove and cool slightly. Meanwhile, whisk the eggs together in a large bowl until smooth. Add the half-and-half, vanilla and salt and whisk to combine. Whisking constantly, pour in the chocolate and whisk until fully combined and smooth. Pour the custard into a 9x13 pan. Soak the dry bread slices in the custard for 10 minutes per side, basting and turning as it sits.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of butter and swirl to melt completely. Add as many slices of bread that the pan will allow and cook until golden brown on the first side, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the toast and cook until the remaining side is golden brown, another 2 minutes. Remove to a rimmed baking sheet with a rack. Continue with the remaining soaked bread adding butter as needed. Place the French toast in the oven until the custard is cooked through and the bread is slightly puffed, about 5 minutes. Remove from the oven and top with the bananas foster, mascarpone whipped cream and generous showering of feuilletine for garnish.

Prep time: 45 minutes
Cook time: 40 minutes
Yield: serves 4 to 6

