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Plaisir Aux Noix / Walnut Dream

Plaisir Aux Noix / Walnut Dream Recipe.

Le Plaisir aux noix is a creation of Gaston Lenôtre. He was a French pastry chef known as a possible creator of the opera cake, the founder of "Lenôtre" a culinary empire...

The original plaisir aux noix filling is based on crème Anglaise buttercream lightened with some Italian meringue. It can also be achieved using mousseline cream. This version is based on creme diplomate; easier to execute, lower in fat and sugar.

Serves 8 +

Walnut praliné

230g walnut halves, chopped

150g powdered sugar.

Method: Toss walnuts in sugar and cook to caramel; stirring constantly. Cool. In a running food processor, blend caramelized walnuts to fine coarse and save 2.7 ounces (80g) for the succes biscuit. Continue to blend the remaining mixture until it forms a paste (praliné). Set aside.

Crème Diplômate (Walnut Diplomate Custard)

300ml milk

1 tsp (5ml) vanilla paste or extract

4 ea. yolks (80g), save egg whites for the succes biscuit

2 ounces (60g) brown sugar

1.5 Tbsp (20g) corn starch

6 grams gelatin sheets, softened in cold water

7 ounces (220g) mascarpone

10 ounces (300g) walnut praliné

1 Tbsp (15ml) rubby Port or walnut wine (vin de noix)

2/3 cup (170g) whipped cream.

Method

Heat up milk and vanilla. Meanwhile, beat yolks, sugar and starch. When milk is boiling, turn the heat off – temper yolk-mixture with one-third of the hot milk. Add yolk-mixture into remaining hot milk – bring to boil and cook for 2 minutes; whisking constantly. Turn off heat, mix in the softened gelatin and mascarpone. Transfer onto baking tray lined with plastic wrap; film in contact – cool and chill completely. Beat chilled custard on high speed, add walnut praliné, port and the whipped cream. Set aside.



Succès Biscuit (Macaron)

Meringue

4 ea. (120g) egg whites, at room temp

1/2 tsp (1g) cream of tartar or a few drops of lemon juice (it stabilizes the meringue)

4 ounces (120g) fine white sugar

2.6 ounces (80g) almond meal

Or,

1.3 ounces (40g) almond meal

1.3 ounces (40g) walnut meal

2.7 ounces (80g) powdered sugar

2 Tbsp (30ml) milk.

2.7 ounces (80g) caramelized walnut meal.

A couple tablespoons of toasted sliced almonds (toast them quickly in a frying pan).

Method

In a food processor, blend almond meal and powdered sugar to combine and add milk. For the meringue, beat to stiff peaks: egg whites with cream of tartar and one-third of the fine white sugar – Fold one-third of the meringue into the almond-sugar mixture. Add remaining meringue and the previously saved caramelized walnut meal.

Turn oven on. On a baking tray lined with a silicone mat or parchment paper, pipe out two 8 -inch (20cm) diameter disk using the #808 pastry tip (one penny /16mlmØ). Make 2 extra smaller disks with remaining mixture if so.

Baking

Bake succes biscuit at 260°F (130°C) for 1 hour and 10 min. Turn oven off and leave succes to dry out for 20 to 30 minutes more. It should be firm to the touch.

Assembly

Place a succes biscuit (flat side down), pipe out 12 large dollops of walnut diplomate cream from the edge of the succes and fill up the center. Coat the surface of the second succes biscuit (flat side up) with a thin layer of filling and top with toasted sliced almonds. Place it on top of the cake like a sandwich and refrigerate it for 6 hours before eating (best overnight). Dust with powdered sugar or snow sugar (it wont melt). Walnut dream cake can be refrigerated for up to 4 days or kept frozen for up to 3 months. Bon appétit!

