



for Thanksgiving

Organic Sugar Pie Pumpkin Crème Brûlée

Source: *Lynn Veal, PCC Cooks*

I love this simple and elegant dessert as an alternative to the usual pumpkin pie for the holidays. It is deeply satisfying to roast your own pumpkin and as a bonus, you'll have leftover puree to make soup or maybe some warm pumpkin bread. You may, however, substitute organic canned pumpkin in a pinch.

Ingredients:

1 small sugar pie pumpkin
1-1/2 cups heavy cream
5 egg yolks
1 cup unrefined sugar, divided
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
Pinch ground clove

For the pumpkin puree:

Up to 2 days ahead: Preheat your oven to 375 F. Cut the pumpkin in half crosswise and place it, cut side down, on a baking sheet. Bake for about 40 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a fork. Allow to cool, scoop out the seeds, and then scoop out the flesh of the pumpkin and puree until smooth. Refrigerate until ready to use.

For the custard crèmes:

Up to 1 day ahead: Preheat your oven to 350 F. In a sauce pan, heat the cream to a simmer. Combine the egg yolks and 1/2 cup of sugar in a large bowl and beat well. Add about a quarter of the hot cream to the yolks to temper them and then pour in the rest of the cream. Stir in the vanilla, spices and 1/2 cup of the pumpkin puree. Fill 6-8 oven-proof ramekins with the mixture and place in a casserole dish. Pour boiling water around the dishes to a depth of about 1 inch. Bake for about 20 minutes or until very lightly set (the custard should still "shimmy" slightly). Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.

For the brûlée:

Just before serving: Sprinkle the custards with the remaining sugar, distributing it evenly over the surface. Place under a broiler until the sugar caramelizes or use a torch.

Note: If using a broiler, place the ramekins in a casserole dish and surround with ice cubes to keep them cool.