

Pistachio Cherry Stuffed French Toast

Servings: 4

Total Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Ingredients

1 day-old challah loaf, preferably homemade, cut into 8 slices
1 (8-oz) package cream cheese, softened
1 (16-oz) bag frozen cherries, thawed and drained, reserving 2 tablespoons juice
3 tablespoons honey
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup pistachios, shelled and coarsely chopped
1 cup whole milk
1 cup heavy whipping cream
3 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 teaspoons ground cinnamon
pinch of salt
unsalted butter

for the glaze-

1/4 cup unsalted butter
1 heaping cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste
pinch of salt
1/4 cup cream or milk, more or less for consistency

Method

In a small bowl, stir together the cream cheese, thawed cherries, 2 tablespoons of reserved cherry juice, honey, salt and pistachios. Mix until combined and the mixture turns pink. Cut a slit down the middle of each challah slice, creating a pocket but not cutting all the way through. Stuff each piece with a hearty amount of filling. Transfer to a baking sheet and place in the refrigerator or freezer to chill and firm up, about 30 minutes.

Heat a heavy duty skillet or griddle over medium-high heat. In a shallow baking dish, whisk together the milk, heavy cream, eggs, vanilla extract, cinnamon and a pinch of salt. Dip the stuffed challah into the milk/cream mixture turning every so often to allow the bread to soak up the liquid. Since the slices are pretty thick make sure they soak up enough liquid. Add a pat of butter to the skillet and swirl it around to melt. Place the soaked french toast, two pieces at a time (depending on the size of your skillet), and cook for 3-5 minutes on the first side or until golden brown. Flip and continue to cook another 3 minutes. Keep the finished toast on a baking sheet in a 250°F oven while you cook the rest.

To make the glaze, brown the butter over medium-high heat in a small saucepan until it is amber to brown in color, about 5 minutes. Watch closely to avoid burning! Transfer the butter, including the brown bits at the bottom of the pan to a large mixing bowl. Add the confectioners'

sugar, vanilla bean paste and a pinch of salt. Slowly add the milk or cream, whisking until smooth. Add additional cream or confectioners' sugar to reach the desired consistency.

Serve french toast immediately with a drizzle of glaze, a sprinkling of pistachios or maple syrup!