

Culinary SOS: Brunos *budino al caramello*

It was love at first bite for this creamy confection of caramel custard, chocolate ganache and whipped sour cream.



The *budino al caramello* from Brunos Trattoria in Brea is topped with whipped sour cream. (Glenn Koenig / Los Angeles Times / February 13, 2013)

By Noelle Carter
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Dear SOS: We had dinner one night at [Brunos Trattoria](#) on Birch Street in downtown Brea. Although most of what we had was actually quite good, we fell in love at first bite with the *budino al caramello* (caramel pudding/chocolate ganache/whipped cream). Yes, it was so good that we would definitely be willing to go there just for that! Is there any way you could get that recipe?

Prabha Atluri

Walnut

Dear Prabha: Creamy caramel custard and rich chocolate ganache are beautifully layered in this dessert, then topped with a dollop of whipped sour cream and a sprinkling of chopped toasted hazelnuts. I'd have to agree — it is love at first bite. Brunos was happy to share its recipe, which we've adapted here.

1 hour, plus cooling and setting times. Serves 8

CARAMEL CUSTARD

- 2 3/4 cups heavy cream
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1 egg plus 3 egg yolks
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 7 tablespoons water
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 4 1/2 tablespoons butter
- 3/4 ounce hazelnut liqueur
- 2 teaspoons clover honey

1. In a bowl, stir together the cream and milk. In a separate metal bowl or double-boiler insert, whisk together the egg, egg yolks and cornstarch.
2. In a heavy-bottomed pan, combine the water, sugar and salt, and cook over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until amber in color (careful not to burn), 2 to 3 minutes. Add the cream and milk mixture, and gently simmer for 5 to 7 minutes.
3. Temper the eggs: Slowly whisk the cream mixture into the eggs to form a custard base. Place the egg base over pan of simmering water (double boiler) and gently cook until the mixture is thickened and coats the back of a spoon (it should have a warm pudding consistency), 6 to 8 minutes. Whisk in the butter, liqueur and honey.
4. Strain the mixture and pour into 8 glasses. Chill, uncovered, until the custard is set, at least 4 hours.

CHOCOLATE GANACHE AND BUDINO AL CAMELLO

- 1 cup heavy cream
- 8 ounces bittersweet (preferably 55%) chocolate, finely chopped
- 8 prepared caramel custards
- Whipped sour cream, for garnish
- Toasted hazelnuts, chopped, for garnish

1. Bring the cream to a boil and pour over the chopped chocolate, stirring occasionally until the chocolate is melted and the mixture is smooth. Set aside to cool.
2. Before serving, pour a layer (about 2 to 3 tablespoons, you may not use all of the ganache) over each set caramel budino, and top with a dollop of whipped sour cream and a sprinkling of chopped hazelnuts.