

Island Princess Sourdough Bread Pudding with Hot Buttered Rum Sauce

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Introduction

In becoming an avid sourdough bread baker over the past several weeks, I slowly realized that I was baking more sourdough bread than my wife and I could eat. We had devoured some loaves, and had given some away to family and neighbors, but most of the rest were sitting around the kitchen, fridge, freezer, or pantry. And most were missing a couple of test slices, so they weren't appropriate to give away. Available storage was full, the loaves were getting stale, and I had to dispose of them. But I just couldn't bear to do it.



At first I started converting the leftover loaves into bread crumbs. Being unable to process them in the Cuisinart because it could not cut through the tough crusts, I pulverized them in the Vitamix, then toasted them, plastic-bagged them, and stuffed them in the kitchen cabinets. As the cabinets became fuller, I realized I needed another outlet for the stale bread.



And that's when my wife and Island Princess Maria suggested I make "Puerto Rican" bread pudding like her mother used to make. She didn't have a recipe, of course, just an approximate list of ingredients. So I started searching and put together a recipe from a variety of sources. The bread came out perfect.

The complete recipe consists of two separately prepared items - Bread Pudding and Hot Rum Sauce to use as topping.

You can dream up your own topping, including maple syrup, whipped cream, unwhipped cream, chocolate syrup, and a meringue (baked or unbaked) of egg whites beaten with sugar and a little cream of tartar. But nothing I tried beats the Hot Rum Sauce, except perhaps for Hot Rum Sauce with chocolate in it.

And, you just can't eat the bread pudding without a topping. You'll need and want it as a combination. Oh, and it's against the rules to use just any old bread. You must use *sourdough* bread. The pudding will turn out firm, moist, and gratifyingly delicious.

Equipment and Preparation

- Oven – preheat to 350°F
- 2-quart baking dish – butter it inside on bottom and sides
- Larger baking pan that above dish will sit in without touching sides
- Large mixing bowl
- Wooden spoon, whisk, sharp knife, cutting board
- Small heavy saucepan



Ingredients

Bread Pudding	Hot Buttered Rum Sauce
1 to 1 ¼ pounds stale sourdough bread 1 cup raisins 5 large eggs ¾ cup sugar 1 tablespoon vanilla 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg ½ teaspoon salt 1 cup coconut crème 4 cups whole milk	1 ½ sticks (12 ounces) unsalted butter 1 ½ cups sugar 8 ounces cup dark rum or bourbon 2 tablespoons water 2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg ¼ teaspoon salt 2 eggs



Cooking Instructions

First, prepare and start cooking the pudding. While it is cooking, make the sauce. Note that this recipe makes one large bread pudding. You may make individual puddings by baking them in ramekins instead of the large baking dish.

Bread Pudding

1. Trim the crust off the sourdough bread. The crust will not be needed in this recipe, so discard it or set it aside for later to process it in a blender to convert it to bread crumbs, then toast it if not already dry.
2. Cut the sourdough bread into 1/2-inch cubes and put in mixing bowl.
3. Separate raisins and toss in bowl to mix them with sourdough bread cubes.
4. Thoroughly whisk together remaining ingredients in another mixing bowl.
5. Dump sourdough bread-cube-and-raisin mix into bowl of mixed liquid to form raw pudding mix.
6. Let raw pudding sit 30 minutes, occasionally pressing on it with your hand or a spoon or spatula so the bread cubes become saturated with the fluid.
7. Spread raw pudding mix evenly in the baking dish.
8. Set the baking dish inside the larger pan and pour water into the larger pan so the water rises to just below the rim and surrounds the baking dish.
9. Set the larger pan with baking dish into the oven, bake for 1 ¼ hour, then remove from oven.
10. Serve warm or cold.



Hot Buttered Rum Sauce

1. Melt butter slowly in saucepan.
2. Stir all other ingredients except egg into the butter until sugar is dissolved and mixture is blended.
3. Remove liquor mixture from heat.
4. Whisk eggs in mixing bowl till light and frothy.
5. Vigorously whisk eggs into liquor mixture. Don't worry about curdling.
6. Cook the sauce over medium heat and bring to simmer, stirring gently till it thickens (about a minute).
7. Serve immediately. Sauce may sit out 8 hours, and will last 3 days refrigerated. Reheat over low heat; if it separates, remove from heat and whisk in a little hot water.



Epilogue

When we finished producing the dessert from the foregoing recipe, we could not wait to dig in, so we did. We found the taste to be heavenly. We actually used too much bread, but it turned out fine, with nicely crusted top bread pieces. We thought our mouths were going to have orgasms when we tasted the combination of flavors from the pudding and the sauce.

Next morning, we slept late and Maria served steaming coffee and Sourdough Bread Pudding with Hot Buttered Rum Sauce topping to me in bed, then she leaned back on the headboard and enjoyed it with me. It was a perfect breakfast for a cold weekend morning.

Just a few minutes ago, Maria brought me a bowl of the pudding with the last of the sauce on it, demanding that I make more to go with the as-yet uneaten pudding. For that reason, I have made the recipe for the sauce large enough to accommodate us next time.

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About the Author

Bob Hurt is a retired computer engineer and software developer. He and his wife Maria live in Clearwater, Florida. They spend their spare time on travel, cooking, eating, reading, and watching movies. Bob eases the pains of retirement by playing guitar, baking sourdough bread, developing web sites, sewing, and writing. You can read some of his works at <http://bobhurt.com>.