

Crème Brûlée Day

FIVE CRISP-TOPPED CUSTARDS FOR JULY 27



A MEALBAKE DESSERT COLLECTION FOR CRÈME BRÛLÉE DAY

MEALBAKE COLLECTION | JULY 27, 2026

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FIVE CRISP-TOPPED CUSTARDS FOR JULY 27



THE COLLECTION

Five Ways to Crack the Caramel

Bake the custards ahead, then offer classic vanilla beside espresso-cardamom, lemon-blueberry, chocolate-orange, and coconut-mango variations. Keep every ramekin cold and dry; torch the sugar shortly before serving so guests hear that signature crack at the summer dinner table.

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[VIEW COLLECTION ONLINE](#)

COLLECTION NOTES

Bake for a Wobble

Remove each custard when the edges are set but the center still trembles as one piece; residual heat completes the set.

Chill Before Covering

Cool the ramekins fully before covering so condensation does not collect on the surface and interfere with caramelizing.

Torch at the Finish

Blot the chilled surface dry, add a thin even sugar layer, and caramelize shortly before serving for the cleanest crack.



THE CLASSIC

Classic Vanilla Crème Brûlée

Silky vanilla bean custard rests beneath a thin, glassy caramel crust in this classic make-ahead French dessert.

INGREDIENTS

METHOD

VIEW ONLINE

ACTIVE

1 hr 5 min

CHILL

4 hr 30 min

TOTAL

5 hr 35 min

SERVES

6

LEVEL

Medium

Active time includes preparation and baking; chill time includes the minimum cooling and refrigeration period.

Vanilla Crème Brûlée

SHOPPING LIST

- 2 cups Heavy Cream
- 1 Vanilla Bean, Split Lengthwise
- 6 Large Egg Yolks
- 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon Fine Sea Salt
- 6 teaspoons Granulated Sugar For Caramelizing

WHY IT WORKS

Crème brûlée is a study in contrast: chilled, softly set vanilla custard beneath a warm, brittle lid of caramelized sugar. This version keeps the custard flavor focused on cream, egg yolks, and real vanilla bean so the signature textures remain the center of attention.

A shallow water bath protects the custards from harsh oven heat and helps them bake evenly. Pull the ramekins while their centers still tremble as one piece; residual heat finishes the set without turning the custard firm or grainy.

The custards are ideal for entertaining because they can be baked and refrigerated up to two days ahead. Keep them uncovered until fully cold, then cover each ramekin so condensation does not drip onto the surface.

Caramelize the sugar shortly before serving. A thin, even coating and a moving torch flame create the cleanest glassy crust, while a brief rest gives the caramel time to harden above the cool custard.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Use shallow, wide ramekins for the best ratio of crisp caramel to custard.
- If the custards have been covered, blot condensation gently before adding the sugar.
- For the crispest shell, torch the custards no more than 20 minutes before serving.

Vanilla Crème Brûlée



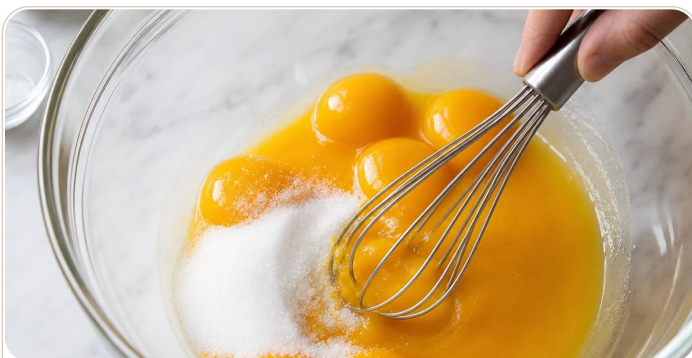
1

Heat the oven to 325°F. Arrange six 4-ounce shallow ramekins in a deep roasting pan and bring a kettle of water to a boil.



2

Pour the cream into a small saucepan. Scrape in the vanilla seeds, add the pod, and heat over medium-low until steaming with tiny bubbles around the edge. Remove from the heat, cover, and steep for 10 minutes.



3

Whisk the egg yolks, 1/3 cup sugar, and salt in a large heatproof bowl just until smooth; avoid whipping in excess air.



4

Remove the vanilla pod. Slowly pour the warm cream into the yolk mixture while whisking constantly, then strain the custard through a fine-mesh sieve into a pitcher. Skim off any surface foam.

Vanilla Crème Brûlée



5

Divide the custard evenly among the ramekins. Pour boiling water into the roasting pan until it reaches halfway up their sides, taking care not to splash the custard.



6

Bake for 30 to 40 minutes, until the edges are set but the centers wobble gently as one piece when nudged. Transfer the ramekins to a rack and cool for 30 minutes.



7

Refrigerate the custards uncovered until cold, at least 4 hours, then cover and chill until ready to serve.



8

Pat away any moisture from each custard. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon sugar evenly over each surface and caramelize with a kitchen torch, moving the flame continuously, until deep amber. Rest for 2 minutes so the crust hardens before serving.



COFFEE AND SPICE

Espresso Cardamom Crème Brûlée

Silky espresso custards scented with green cardamom and finished with a thin, glassy caramel crust. These elegant individual desserts chill beautifully ahead, leaving only the sugar topping to torch just before serving.

[INGREDIENTS](#)[METHOD](#)[VIEW ONLINE](#)

ACTIVE

1 hr 5 min

CHILL

4 hr 30 min

TOTAL

5 hr 35 min

SERVES

6

LEVEL

Medium

Active time includes preparation and baking; chill time includes the minimum cooling and refrigeration period.

Espresso Cardamom Crème Brûlée

SHOPPING LIST

- 2 cups Heavy Cream
- 6 Green Cardamom Pods, Lightly Crushed
- 2 teaspoons Instant Espresso Powder
- 5 Large Egg Yolks
- 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1/8 teaspoon Fine Sea Salt
- 6 teaspoons Granulated Sugar, For Caramelizing

WHY IT WORKS

Espresso and cardamom give classic crème brûlée the character of an after-dinner coffee without overwhelming its delicate custard. Freshly crushed green cardamom contributes a citrusy warmth, while instant espresso powder supplies concentrated roasted flavor without thinning the cream.

A gentle water bath is the key to the smooth texture. Hot water surrounds the ramekins with even heat, allowing the edges to set while the centers retain a slight wobble. Straining the custard before baking removes the crushed spice and any bits of cooked egg.

The custards are designed for advance preparation and need at least four hours to chill, though an overnight rest works especially well. Keep them uncovered only until cold, then cover each ramekin so the surface stays fresh and does not absorb refrigerator aromas.

Caramelize the sugar shortly before serving. A thin, even layer melts faster and hardens into a brittle sheet that cracks neatly under a spoon, revealing the cool espresso custard beneath.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Steep the crushed cardamom for no longer than 10 minutes so its floral flavor stays balanced rather than medicinal.
- For the smoothest custard, whisk gently and skim off foam before baking.
- If using a broiler instead of a torch, chill the ramekins in the freezer for 15 minutes first and watch them continuously under the heat.

Espresso Cardamom Crème Brûlée



1

Heat the oven to 325°F. Arrange six 4-ounce ramekins in a deep roasting pan and bring a kettle of water to a boil for the water bath.



2

Combine the heavy cream and crushed cardamom pods in a small saucepan. Warm over medium heat until steaming and tiny bubbles appear at the edge, then remove from the heat, whisk in the espresso powder, and steep for 10 minutes.



3

Whisk the egg yolks, 1/3 cup sugar, vanilla, and salt in a medium bowl just until smooth and slightly lighter in color; avoid whipping in excess air.



4

Pour the warm cream through a fine-mesh sieve into a measuring cup, pressing gently on the cardamom, then discard the pods. Slowly whisk the strained cream into the yolk mixture.

Espresso Cardamom Crème Brûlée



5

Strain the custard once more, divide it evenly among the ramekins, and skim away any surface bubbles. Pour enough boiling water into the roasting pan to come halfway up the ramekin sides.



6

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until the edges are set but each center still trembles gently when nudged. Carefully lift the ramekins from the water bath and cool on a rack for 30 minutes.



7

Refrigerate the custards until thoroughly cold and firm, at least 4 hours or overnight. Once cold, cover the ramekins if holding them longer than 4 hours.



8

Just before serving, blot away any moisture on each custard and sprinkle 1 teaspoon sugar in a thin, even layer. Caramelize with a kitchen torch until deep amber, let the crust harden for 1 to 2 minutes, and serve immediately.



BRIGHT SUMMER FRUIT

Lemon Blueberry Crème Brûlée

Silky lemon-vanilla custard sits over a concentrated blueberry layer and finishes with a thin, glassy caramel crust. Individual ramekins make this bright summer crème brûlée an elegant dinner-party dessert.

INGREDIENTS

METHOD

VIEW ONLINE

ACTIVE

1 hr 20 min

CHILL

4 hr 30 min

TOTAL

5 hr 50 min

SERVES

6

LEVEL

Medium

Active time includes preparation and baking; chill time includes the minimum cooling and refrigeration period.

Lemon Blueberry Crème Brûlée

SHOPPING LIST

- 1 cup Fresh Blueberries
- 2 tablespoons Granulated Sugar For Blueberry Layer
- 1 tablespoon Fresh Lemon Juice
- 2 cups Heavy Cream
- 2 teaspoons Finely Grated Lemon Zest
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Vanilla Bean Paste
- 6 Large Egg Yolks
- 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar For Custard
- 1/8 teaspoon Fine Sea Salt
- 6 tablespoons Granulated Sugar For Caramel Crust

WHY IT WORKS

This variation keeps the defining contrast of crème brûlée—a cool, supple custard beneath brittle caramel—while adding a restrained layer of summer fruit. Blueberries are cooked down until thick before they meet the custard, so their flavor stays vivid without making the cream watery.

Lemon zest perfumes the warm cream, while vanilla rounds out its sharper citrus notes. Straining the custard removes the zest and any cooked egg, leaving a smooth mixture that bakes gently in a water bath.

Low, wide ramekins give the custard an even bake and provide plenty of surface for the caramel crust. Pull them from the oven while the centers still tremble; carryover heat will finish setting them without turning the texture firm.

Chill the custards thoroughly, then blot away any condensation before adding sugar. A dry, level surface is the key to a thin crust that caramelizes quickly and cracks cleanly under a spoon.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Use shallow ramekins of equal size so all six custards bake at the same rate.
- The blueberry layer must be thick and cool before the custard is added; excess berry liquid can loosen the finished dessert.
- For the crispest crust, torch the sugar only after the chilled custard surface has been thoroughly dried.

Lemon Blueberry Crème Brûlée



1

Combine the blueberries, 2 tablespoons sugar, and lemon juice in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring and crushing some berries, until thick and jammy with no watery liquid remaining.



2

Divide the blueberry mixture among six 6-ounce ramekins and spread it into thin, even layers. Place the ramekins in a deep roasting pan and let the fruit cool while you prepare the custard.



3

Heat the oven to 325°F. Warm the heavy cream, lemon zest, and vanilla bean paste in a saucepan over medium-low heat until steaming and tiny bubbles appear around the edge. Remove from the heat and rest for 5 minutes.



4

Whisk the egg yolks, 1/3 cup sugar, and salt in a large bowl just until smooth, without incorporating excess air. Slowly whisk in the warm cream, then strain the custard through a fine-mesh sieve into a pitcher.

Lemon Blueberry Crème Brûlée



5

Divide the custard evenly among the ramekins. Pour enough hot water into the roasting pan to reach halfway up their sides, taking care not to splash the custards.



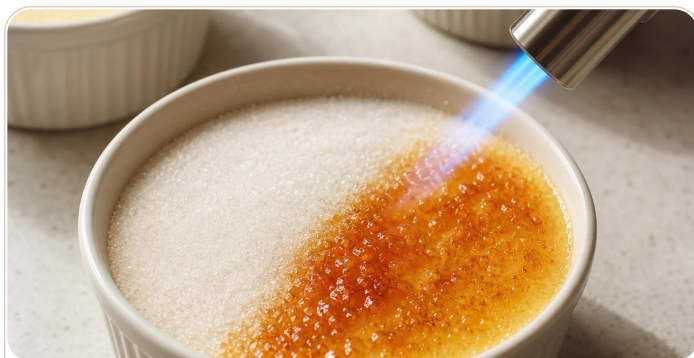
6

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until the edges are set but each center still jiggles gently when nudged. Transfer the ramekins to a rack, cool for 30 minutes, then cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.



7

Just before serving, uncover the ramekins and blot any surface moisture with a paper towel. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon sugar in a thin, even layer over each custard.



8

Caramelize each surface with a kitchen torch, moving the flame continuously until the sugar melts and turns deep amber. Rest for 2 minutes so the crust hardens, then serve immediately.



RICH CHOCOLATE

Dark Chocolate Orange Crème Brûlée

Silky dark chocolate custard is brightened with fresh orange zest, then chilled and capped with a thin layer of caramelized sugar that cracks cleanly under a spoon.

INGREDIENTS

METHOD

VIEW ONLINE

ACTIVE

1 hr

CHILL

4 hr 45 min

TOTAL

5 hr 45 min

SERVES

6

LEVEL

Medium

Active time includes preparation and baking; chill time includes the minimum cooling and refrigeration period.

Chocolate Orange Crème Brûlée

SHOPPING LIST

- 2 cups Heavy Cream
- 4 ounces Bittersweet Chocolate, Finely Chopped
- 6 Large Egg Yolks
- 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar
- 2 teaspoons Finely Grated Orange Zest
- 1 teaspoon Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1/8 teaspoon Fine Sea Salt
- 6 tablespoons Granulated Sugar For Caramelizing

WHY IT WORKS

This variation keeps the defining contrast of crème brûlée intact: a cool, spoonable custard below and a brittle caramel crust above. Bittersweet chocolate deepens the custard without turning it into ganache, while orange zest lifts the finish and keeps each bite from feeling heavy.

Gentle heat matters more than speed. Warming the cream with the zest extracts its fragrant oils, and adding the hot cream gradually protects the egg yolks from scrambling. Straining the finished base removes zest and any small bits of cooked egg, leaving a polished texture.

A water bath buffers the ramekins from direct oven heat. The custards are ready when the edges hold still but the centers tremble like soft gelatin when the pan is nudged. They will continue to set as they cool, so a firm center in the oven is a sign they have gone too far.

Chill the custards uncovered until cold, then cover them for longer storage. Add and torch the sugar only shortly before serving: a dry, cold surface produces the thinnest glassy lid and preserves the satisfying crack that makes the dessert special.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Use chocolate between 60% and 70% cacao for depth without a dry or overly bitter custard.
- Avoid whisking air into the base; foam bakes into bubbles instead of a smooth surface.
- The chilled custards can be covered and refrigerated for up to 2 days before the sugar is caramelized.
- If using a broiler instead of a torch, chill the ramekins in the freezer for 15 minutes first and watch them continuously.

Chocolate Orange Crème Brûlée



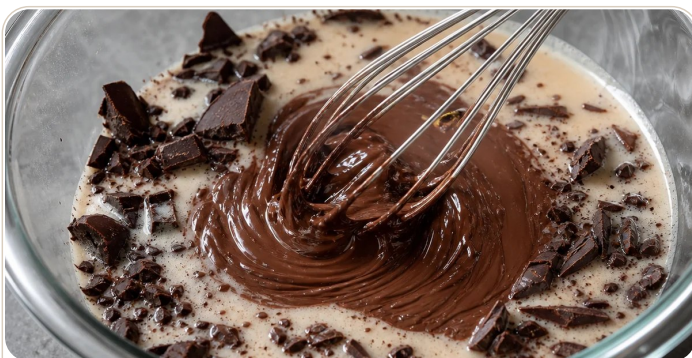
1

Heat the oven to 300°F. Arrange six 4-ounce ramekins in a deep roasting pan and bring a kettle of water to a boil for the water bath.



2

Combine the cream and orange zest in a saucepan. Heat over medium-low until steaming and small bubbles appear around the edge, then remove from the heat and rest for 5 minutes.



3

Place the chopped chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Pour the hot cream over it, wait 1 minute, then whisk slowly from the center until the chocolate is completely melted and the mixture is glossy.



4

Whisk the egg yolks, 1/3 cup sugar, vanilla, and salt in a separate bowl just until smooth. Gradually whisk in the warm chocolate cream so the yolks heat gently without foaming.

Chocolate Orange Crème Brûlée



5

Strain the custard through a fine-mesh sieve into a pitcher, then divide it evenly among the ramekins. Skim away any surface bubbles with a spoon.



6

Set the roasting pan on the oven rack. Pour in enough boiling water to reach halfway up the ramekins, taking care not to splash the custard, and bake for 30 to 35 minutes.



7

Remove the ramekins when the outer edges are set and each center still gives a gentle, unified wobble. Lift them from the water bath, cool for 45 minutes, then refrigerate until thoroughly cold, at least 4 hours.



8

Just before serving, blot any moisture from the custard surfaces. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon caramelizing sugar in a thin even layer over each custard and torch in sweeping motions until amber and glassy; let the crust harden for 2 minutes.



DAIRY-FREE TROPICAL

Coconut Mango Crème Brûlée

A silky dairy-free coconut custard rests over a concentrated mango layer beneath a thin, glassy caramel crust. Baked in individual ramekins, this restrained tropical crème brûlée makes an elegant summer dessert.

INGREDIENTS

METHOD

VIEW ONLINE

ACTIVE

1 hr 25 min

CHILL

4 hr 30 min

TOTAL

5 hr 55 min

SERVES

6

LEVEL

Medium

Active time includes preparation and baking; chill time includes the minimum cooling and refrigeration period.

Coconut Mango Crème Brûlée

SHOPPING LIST

- 1 1/2 cups Ripe Mango Flesh
- 2 tablespoons Granulated Sugar For Mango Layer
- 1 tablespoon Fresh Lime Juice
- 2 cups Full-Fat Canned Coconut Milk
- 1/2 cup Unsweetened Coconut Cream
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Vanilla Bean Paste
- 7 Large Egg Yolks
- 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar For Custard
- 1/8 teaspoon Fine Sea Salt
- 6 tablespoons Granulated Sugar For Caramel Crust

WHY IT WORKS

This dairy-free crème brûlée uses full-fat coconut milk and coconut cream for the richness usually supplied by heavy cream. The coconut flavor stays rounded rather than overpowering, allowing vanilla and ripe mango to share the spotlight.

Mango is cooked into a thick, bright layer before it goes into the ramekins. Removing its excess moisture protects the custard's texture and gives each spoonful a clean tropical finish instead of a watery fruit pocket.

A gentle water bath keeps the egg-rich coconut custard supple as it bakes. Pull the ramekins when the edges are set but the centers still tremble, then chill them thoroughly so the texture becomes smooth and sliceable beneath the crust.

Dry the chilled surfaces before adding a measured layer of sugar. A moving torch flame melts the sugar quickly into a thin amber sheet without warming the custard or scorching the coconut underneath.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Choose full-fat canned coconut milk with no added sweetener, and whisk it well so the separated cream and liquid are fully combined.
- Cook the mango until a spoon drawn across the pan leaves a clear trail; a loose purée can soften the custard.
- For the cleanest caramel crust, torch the sugar only after the chilled custard surface has been thoroughly dried.

Coconut Mango Crème Brûlée



1

Blend the mango until completely smooth. Combine it with 2 tablespoons sugar and the lime juice in a small saucepan, then cook over medium heat for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring often, until very thick and reduced to about 3/4 cup.



2

Divide the mango mixture among six 6-ounce ramekins and spread it into thin, even layers. Set the ramekins in a deep roasting pan and let the fruit cool completely.



3

Heat the oven to 325°F. Whisk the coconut milk and coconut cream together in a saucepan until smooth, then add the vanilla. Warm over medium-low heat until steaming and tiny bubbles appear at the edge; remove from the heat.



4

Whisk the egg yolks, 1/3 cup sugar, and salt in a large bowl just until smooth, without making the mixture foamy. Slowly whisk in the warm coconut mixture, then strain the custard through a fine-mesh sieve into a pitcher.

Coconut Mango Crème Brûlée



5

Divide the custard evenly among the ramekins. Pour hot water into the roasting pan until it reaches halfway up the ramekin sides, taking care not to splash the custards.



6

Bake for 38 to 43 minutes, until the edges are set and each center still jiggles gently when nudged. Transfer the ramekins to a rack, cool for 30 minutes, then cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.



7

Just before serving, uncover the ramekins and blot away all surface moisture with a paper towel. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon sugar in a thin, even layer over each custard.



8

Caramelize each surface with a kitchen torch, keeping the flame moving until the sugar melts and turns deep amber. Let the crust harden for 2 minutes, then serve immediately.