

HELADO DE CHOCOLATE MEXICANO

FROZEN CUSTARD WITH CANELA, CHILE, AND MEXICAN CHOCOLATE

The Maya of the Yucatán lowlands took the Olmec technology of cultivating cacao and producing chocolate, and converted it into big business. They traded the product all over Mesoamerica and became very wealthy in the process. This rich ice cream is based on the Olmec/Maya/Aztec beverage of chocolate, which at times included chile and vanilla, and after the Spanish conquest, canela. We add all three for a surprising punch! In our classes we use only 100% pure bittersweet Criollo chocolate from Tabasco – considered to be the world's finest.

10 SERVINGS

☞ PREPARE THE ICE CREAM BASE ☞

2 cups (500ml) crema (Substitute: heavy cream or "crema para batir")

2 cups (500ml) milk

1 cup (200g) sugar

1/8 tsp. (.625ml) salt

1/4 tsp. (1.25ml) vanilla

1/8 tsp. (.625ml) canela

Scant 1/8 tsp. (.45ml) dried chile, powdered

4 large egg yolks

8 ounces (230g) bittersweet chocolate, chopped

STEP 1 IN A HEAVY SAUCEPAN, combine the cream, milk, sugar, salt, vanilla, *canela* and cayenne. Simmer over medium heat, stirring constantly, about 8 minutes, or until sugar is dissolved and mixture is hot. **DO NOT ALLOW TO BOIL.**

STEP 2 USING A HAND-HELD ELECTRIC MIXER, beat egg yolks in a medium mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Still beating, gradually add 1 cup (250ml) of the warm milk mixture. Mix thoroughly. Very slowly, whisk the egg mixture back into the milk. Reduce heat to medium-low. Stir with a spoon about 15-20 minutes or until the mixture thickens enough to coat the spoon. It should read about 180°F (82°C) on a candy thermometer. **DO NOT ALLOW TO BOIL** or the eggs may scramble.

STEP 3 REMOVE FROM HEAT and immediately stir in the chocolate; continue stirring until the chocolate is melted. If small pieces of the chocolate do not blend in, use the electric mixer to smooth. Allow to cool, then cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

☞ FREEZE ☞

STEP 4 PROCESS IN AN ELECTRIC ICE CREAM MAKER according to manufacturer's directions. Place finished ice cream in a covered freezer container and freeze for 2-3 hours before serving. The ice cream will stay delicious for at least 3 days.