

Flan de Coco al Caramelo (Caramelized Coconut Flan)

Serves 8:

For the caramel: 1/2 cup sugar

For the flan:

4 cups whole milk 1 vanilla bean, split in half lengthwise Peel of 1 large lemon 5 egg yolks 5 whole eggs3/4 cup sugar3 tablespoons finest-quality Spanish brandy1/2 cup packed (or 3 ounces) sweet, shredded coconut

For the garnish: About 3 tablespoons shredded coconut Optional: Sweet berries like blueberries, raspberries, and fanned strawberries

To prepare the caramel: In a small heavy saucepan, dissolve the 1/2 cup sugar in 2 tablespoons water. Cook over medium-high heat until sugar melts and turns brown (don't stir, just shake pan around). Immediately pour caramel into a 5-cup ring mold. With oven mittens on both hands, rotate mold gently, swirling caramel to cover bottom and some of the sides; keep moving mold around until caramel is almost set.

To prepare the flan: Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Combine milk, vanilla bean, and lemon peel in a saucepan and cook over low heat for 10 minutes. Cover and set aside for 15 minutes. In a food processor beat egg yolks, eggs and sugar until light and foamy. Discard vanilla bean and lemon peel. Pour hot milk into egg mixture in a slow steady stream, beating constantly (it will make lots of foam). Stir in brandy and 1/2 cup coconut. Immediately pour mixture into mold and place it inside a larger pan filled with boiling water 1/3 way up the mold. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 to 50 minutes (depending on the oven), until a cake tester comes out clean.

Let flan cool at room temperature, and chill. Meanwhile, in a dry skillet toast 3 tablespoons coconut for the garnish, stirring, until golden.

To assemble the dish: Unmold flan onto a dessert platter with a rim. Spoon caramel left in mold on top of the flan. Garnish with toasted coconut around the top of the flan and berries around it. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Wine Pairing: Marimar Estate Blanc de Noirs Recipe from: *The Spanish Table,* page 217 by Marimar Torres