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Blueberry and Yuzu Trifle

Serves 6

From [Charcoal: New Ways to Cook with Fire](#) by Josiah Citrin and Joann Cianciulli © 2019. Reprinted in arrangement with Penguin Random House New York.

“With layers of sweetened blueberries, soft sponge cake, and fluffy whipped cream, this do-ahead dessert is the perfect finish to a summer supper. A fun twist of the classic pairing of blueberry and lemon, tart yuzu juice injects a distinctive citrus flavor and aroma that adds an exotic element to this trifle. You can prepare all of the components ahead of time and assemble shortly before serving. I like to serve guests individual trifles built in clear 12-ounce rocks glasses for an impressive presentation.”

INGREDIENTS

Biscuit-Sponge Cake:

¼ cup sugar
3 large egg whites, preferably organic and free-range, at room temperature
3 large egg yolks, preferably organic and free-range
¼ cup all-purpose flour
Nonstick cooking spray

Blueberry Yuzu Compote:

½ cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar
3½ teaspoons apple pectin powder
4 pints blueberries, rinsed and dried
½ cup yuzu juice, plus more for brushing

Pastry Cream:

4 large egg yolks, preferably organic and free-range
2 large eggs, preferably organic and free-range
5 teaspoons cornstarch
4 tablespoons sugar
2 cups milk
1 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

Whipped Cream:

1 cup heavy cream, cold
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make the sponge cake: Combine the sugar and egg whites in the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with a wire whisk attachment. Whip on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form. Slow to lowest speed and add the egg yolks, one by one, until they are completely incorporated. Remove the bowl from the mixer and fold in the flour with a rubber spatula, 1 tablespoon at a time, until fully incorporated.

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INSTRUCTIONS (continued)

2. Preheat the oven to 300°F. Coat a 9 x 13-inch baking dish with nonstick spray, and then lay a piece of parchment paper on top to cover—the spray will keep the parchment stuck in place in the pan.

3. Spread the batter in an even layer to reach the sides of the pan. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until the cake is light golden brown and bounces back to the touch. Cool completely in the pan. May be made 1 day ahead, covered, at room temperature.

4. Make the blueberry compote: Mix the sugar and pectin in a small bowl with your fingers to thoroughly combine. Put 3 pints of blueberries in a saucepan and place over medium heat. Cook and stir until the berries start to soften, 5 to 8 minutes. Sprinkle in the sugar-pectin mixture and continue to cook and stir until the blueberries release their juices and look jam-like, about 3 minutes. Pour in the yuzu juice and continue to simmer and stir until thick, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and fold in the remaining pint of blueberries. Set aside at room temperature to cool completely. May be made up to 1 day ahead and stored covered in the refrigerator.

5. Make the pastry cream: In a large bowl, cream together the egg yolks, eggs, cornstarch, and 2 tablespoons of sugar with a whisk until the mixture is thick and pale yellow, about 2 minutes.

6. Combine the milk, cream, remaining 2 tablespoons sugar, and vanilla in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Bring to a brief simmer but do not boil, or it might overflow. Using a large ladle or measuring cup, temper the eggs by gradually whisking half of the hot vanilla cream into the egg-and-sugar mixture. Do not add the hot cream too quickly or the eggs will cook and begin to scramble. Add the tempered eggs back into the pot and whisk over medium-low heat until the mixture begins to thicken and the raw taste of the cornstarch is cooked out, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat. Strain the custard through a fine-mesh strainer into a clean bowl set over a bowl of ice. Stir to cool it down completely. Cover and store in the refrigerator until ready to use. Note that you will likely have more pastry cream than you need for the trifles. Any leftover can be spread on toast with fruit jam or dolloped on fresh fruit.

7. Make the whipped cream: Chill a mixing bowl and wire whisk in the freezer for 10 minutes before beginning. Whisk the cream and vanilla in the chilled bowl until it begins to foam and thicken up. Add the confectioners' sugar and continue to beat until stiff peaks form. Do not over-whip. Cover and store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

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INSTRUCTIONS (continued)

8. To build the trifles: Fold a dish towel on the counter where you are layering the trifles. Working with 1 rocks glass at a time, spoon $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the pastry cream into the bottom of the glass. Tap the glass on the folded towel to flatten the pastry cream into an even layer. Next, top the pastry cream with 3 tablespoons of the blueberry compote and gently spread out evenly with the back of a teaspoon. Put a disk of cake on top, pressing down gently with your fingers so there is not a gap between the compote and cake. Repeat the process with the pastry cream and compote to create a second layer. To finish, top each trifle with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the whipped cream (you may use a pastry bag fitted with a large round tip or a teaspoon to dollop on top). Use a knife or flat spatula to level off the cream with the rim of the glass. Repeat with the remaining servings. When ready to assemble the trifles, using a rocks glass that you will be serving in, invert the rim of the glass on top of the cake and punch out 6 circles. Brush the tops of the cake circles with yuzu juice to moisten. The trifles can easily be made 1 day before you plan to serve.

