

Chocolate (Leftover) Bread Pudding with Caramel Sauce – Alison Mountford



By Alison Mountford, contributing chef

- 1 can of sweetened condensed milk
- 6 1/2 cups bread cubes (from a 1-3 day old crusty loaf, or challah or brioche)
- 1 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips, divided
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 cups milk or half-and-half, divided
- 6 large eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon large flake finishing salt like Maldon Sea Salt (optional)

Caramel - remove the label and cover the sealed can of condensed milk with 6-10 inches of water. Simmer for 3 and a half hours, checking that it is always covered with water. Let cool **completely**, then open the can. Stir and you have caramel! (Dulce de leche)

Butter the bottom and sides of a 2-quart round baking dish or a 9" x 13" pan.

Toss the bread cubes with 1 cup of the chopped chocolate, and place in the prepared pan.

Combine the remaining 1/2 cup chopped chocolate with the sugar, cocoa, and 1 1/2 cups of the half & half in a saucepan set over low heat.

Cook, whisking constantly, until the chocolate is melted and the mixture is thickened and smooth. Take off the heat and let it cool for 10 minutes.

Whisk in the remaining 1 1/2 cups of milk or half & half then whisk in the eggs, salt, and vanilla.

Pour the mixture over the bread cubes, pressing down gently to absorb, and let it rest for 30 minutes or so at room temperature, until the chocolate custard has been absorbed by the bread.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 325°F.

Bake the dish for 45 to 50 minutes, until it's set and slightly puffy. If it starts to get too brown, you can cover loosely with foil.

Remove from the oven, sprinkle with sea salt, and let cool for 10 minutes to allow the custard to fully set before serving.

Serve warm with caramel sauce and whipped cream, ice cream, or dusted with powdered sugar if desired.