

## Maple Syrup Crème Brulee Recipe

2 cups heavy cream  
1/2 vanilla bean (real vanilla bean!)  
1 small egg  
3 large egg yolks  
7 tablespoons Grade A 'real/pure' maple syrup  
4 tablespoons Demarara sugar (sugar in the raw), for topping  
6 (4-ounce) Brulee molds.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

Pour the heavy cream into a non-reactive saucepan and place over medium heat. While the cream is heating, slice the vanilla bean in half lengthwise, using a sharp paring knife. Separate the seeds from the skin by scraping the bean with the knife. Place the seeds and skin in the heating cream. Scald the cream by heating it until bubbles start to form around the edge of the pan. Remove from the heat.

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the whole egg, egg yolks, and maple syrup until well blended. Continue to whisk while slowly pouring the hot cream into the egg mixture and whisk until the mixture is smooth and homogenous in color. Pour the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve to remove the vanilla bean pieces and overcooked eggs. Your next step will be made easier if you strain the mixture into a large measuring cup with a spout.

Lightly butter ramekins to avoid sticking. Place the molds on a baking sheet with 1-inch-high sides. Fill the molds half-full with the custard and set the sheet in the oven (it's much easier to transfer the sheet with the molds only half-full).

Finish filling the molds to the top as the custard will lose volume as it bakes. Pour hot water from the tap into the baking sheet to reach halfway up the sides of the molds. If you are using a convection oven a water bath is not needed

Baking time is approximately 40 minutes. When baked correctly, the custard should tremble slightly when gently shaken. If you detect any liquid under the skin, the custard is under baked. Put them back in the oven and shake them every 5 minutes or so until they are ready.

Remove the molds from the water bath and place on a cooling rack for 30 minutes. Then refrigerate for 2 hours (up to 3 days) before serving; the custards will finish setting in the refrigerator. Let the water bath cool before removing it from the oven.

Preheat the broiler.

If condensation occurs during chilling, carefully blot with a paper towel to remove moisture. Place the molds on a clean baking sheet. Sprinkle 2 teaspoons of the sugar over the top of the custards. It is important to spread the sugar evenly; if it is too thick or too thin in places, the caramelization will not be even across the top. When the broiler is hot, place the sheet about 4 inches under the broiler and broil until the sugar is caramelized. Keep a close eye on the Crème Brulee during broiling. They are finished when they are light brown. Place each mold on a small dessert plate and serve immediately.

Alternatively skip the last step and caramelize using a torch.

