

## BUONA DOMENICA

### FROZEN ESPRESSO ZABAGLIONE

This clever dessert is a bit like a frozen coffee soufflé; light and airy but with the robust flavor of freshly brewed espresso (spiked with Cognac). It's rich, thanks to the whipped egg yolks that form its (deceptively light) custard base, so a little goes a long way. I serve it in demitasse cups, with little silver espresso spoons. *(Recipe adapted from one by David Tanis published in the New York Times.)*

Tips for making zabaglione:

Making zabaglione can be tricky. It is essentially a light custard, made from whipping egg yolks with sugar and (usually) Marsala wine, and heating the mixture over a *bagno maria* (simmering water bath) until it doubles or triples in volume. You must whisk the mixture the entire time it's on the stovetop and bring its temperature up slowly, or you risk ending up with scrambled eggs. If not properly whipped, the zabaglione can separate.

Copper is the best material for making zabaglione because it conducts heat evenly. If you don't have a copper bowl, use heat-proof glass. You can use a stainless-steel bowl, but be careful, as the thinness of the metal could cause the eggs to overheat and scramble.

Most recipes for zabaglione call for a hand whisk, which is the best tool for beating air into the eggs. However, I use a hand mixer, which is faster and far less taxing on my wrist.

Use high-quality espresso and brew it yourself, whether using an espresso machine or a stovetop Moka pot. I like Mr. Espresso Neapolitan espresso, which I've been using for the past several months as part of a collaboration with the Oakland, CA-based roasting company. Any of Mr. Espresso's three espresso roasts: Neapolitan (medium-dark roast), Tuscan (medium roast), and Triestino (medium-light roast) work with this recipe, but I am partial to the darker Neapolitan roast.

Classic zabaglione is served warm or at room temperature. Here, the custard is instead frozen until firm, then removed from the freezer a few minutes before serving time to soften slightly. It's a bit like a semifreddo or a mousse and once you taste a spoonful, you'll know it was worth the fiddly process.

Makes 8 demitasse servings

## INGREDIENTS

4 large egg yolks  
4 to 5 tablespoons sugar  
2 tablespoons Cognac  
1/3 cup freshly brewed espresso, slightly cooled  
Whipped cream, for serving

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill a small to medium pot with water and bring it to a simmer over medium heat.
2. Use a bowl that will sit securely in the pot without its bottom touching the simmering water—you can use a double boiler if you have one. Combine the egg yolks and 4 tablespoons of sugar in the bowl and use a whisk or hand mixer to whip the mixture until thick and lightened in color. Dribble in the Cognac and the coffee, whisking all the while.
3. Place a large-ish bowl partially filled with ice or ice water on a clean kitchen towel near (but not on) the stove.
4. Set the bowl with the egg and coffee mixture over the pot of simmering water and whisk constantly until the eggs start to warm up and turn foamy. You may need to use a kitchen towel to grasp the bowl as it heats up. After about 5 minutes, maybe less, the egg mixture will start to thicken and grow in volume. Keep whisking until the zabaglione has at least doubled in volume and you can see tracks from the whisk or beaters. This could take another 5 minutes or so.
5. Remove the bowl from the heat and set it in the bowl of ice and continue to whisk. Keep whisking until the mixture is light and thick and has cooled to room temperature. It should be the texture of very softly whipped cream or a very thick pouring custard.
6. Arrange eight demitasse cups on a small baking tray. Pour or spoon the espresso zabaglione into the cups, until they are nearly full. Cover the cups lightly with a sheet of plastic wrap and set the tray in the freezer. Freeze the zabaglione for at least 4 hours; overnight is fine.

7. To serve, remove the zabaglione from the freezer and let sit for 10 minutes. Garnish each demitasse with a dollop of freshly whipped cream and a sprinkle of finely ground espresso. Serve with demitasse spoons.

VARIATION: Before portioning out and freezing the zabaglione, gently fold in about 1 cup stiffly whipped cream (this version yields several more portions). Because of the crystals formed by the cream, it isn't quite as smooth as cream-free frozen zabaglione, but the combination of coffee and cream is delicious. If adding whipped cream to the zabaglione, you can omit the whipped cream garnish and just sprinkle each serving with a pinch of finely ground espresso.

If you don't have demitasse cups, spoon the zabaglione into a single serving dish and freeze. Remove from the freezer 10 minutes before serving, then spoon it into small bowls and serve with a whipped cream and ground espresso garnish.