



THE FRONT BURNER

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Make-Ahead Zabaglione with Amaretti

Serves 4-5

One of the great desserts of Italy is zabaglione, an ethereal warm custard made by whisking egg yolks together with Marsala wine over simmering water. Unfortunately, it needs to be prepared just before serving, which is a problem. Instead, I make this cold zabaglione with whipped cream and crushed amaretti that's even better made ahead.

6 extra-large egg yolks
1/2 cup superfine sugar
3/4 cup dry Italian Marsala wine, such as Florio
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon pure almond extract
3/4 cup cold heavy cream
4 to 6 (double) Italian Amaretti di Saronno cookies, lightly crushed (see note)

Place the egg yolks, sugar, and Marsala wine in a large heat-proof glass bowl and whisk them together. Place the bowl on a pan of simmering water to make a double boiler and whisk the mixture almost constantly for 5 to 7 minutes, until it expands in volume and becomes thickened. You'll see the froth disappear and the whisk will leave a little trail in the mixture. Don't walk away from it or you'll end up with scrambled eggs! Off the heat, whisk in the vanilla and almond extracts. Set aside for 30 minutes to cool to room temperature, whisking once or twice as it cools.

Place the cream in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment (you can also use a hand mixer) and beat it just until it forms firm peaks. With a rubber spatula, carefully fold the cream into the Marsala mixture. Spoon half of the mixture into each of 4 or 5 decorative glasses (depending on the size), sprinkle each with 1 tablespoon of crushed Amaretti, and spoon the rest of the mixture on top. Sprinkle with the remaining Amaretti crumbs, cover with plastic wrap, and chill for a few hours or overnight. Serve cold

MAKE IT AHEAD: Prepare completely and refrigerate for up to 2 days. Sprinkle on extra crushed Amaretti before serving.

NOTES: Amaretti di Saronno comes 2 in each wrapper; I use the cookies from 4 to 6 wrappers. Crush them lightly with the side of a knife blade.