

Cheese Flan

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 12-ounce can evaporated milk
- 1½ cups whole milk
- 5 extra-large eggs
- 5 ounces cream cheese
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract

INSTRUCTIONS: Preheat the oven to 250°.

Melt the sugar in a saucepan over medium-high heat and cook until it turns into a smooth dark amber caramel. Pour into the bottom of an 8-inch souffle dish or other round mold.

Using the back of a knife, scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean and add to a blender. Add the three milks, eggs, cream cheese and almond extract. Blend until smooth, then pour through a strainer into the caramel-lined mold.

Set the mold into a larger baking pan and pour enough very hot water into the pan to come halfway up the sides of the mold. Bake until the flan has set, 2½-3 hours — a toothpick inserted in the center should come out clean.

Let cool, then cover the mold and refrigerate overnight.

When you are ready to serve, run a knife along the inside of the mold to loosen the flan. Pour about ½ inch of hot water in a pan large enough to hold the mold and set the mold in it for 10 minutes, so it will unmold more easily. Remove it from the water, wipe dry and place a shallow bowl or a small platter over the top. Invert the flan into the bowl, and serve.

Serves 8-12

PER SERVING: 289 calories, 10 g protein, 40 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat (6 g saturated), 132 mg cholesterol, 155 mg sodium, 0 g fiber.