

Crème Brûlée with Verbena and Lemon Zest

For four

We made this from the Essential Pepin cookbook for our cookbook dinner on December 20, 2025. Tim said it was the best he'd ever had so we made it again for a New Year's Eve dinner with our friends in Charleston. We found dried verbena and lemon in the Medicinals section of By-the-pound.



Ingredients

- 1/2 cup dried verbena leaves
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 lemon
- 5 eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 tsp. lemon zest
- 4 raspberries
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar



Equipment

- Zesting tool
- Saucepan
- 2 Bowls
- Fine strainer
- 4 ramekins that hold almost a cup
- Deep pan in which to make a water bath for the ramekins
- Butane torch



Verbena and Lemon Zest Crème Brûlée:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Description	Time (min)	
	Preheat the oven to 350		
	Use zesting tool to remove 2 tsp. of lemon zest (rind) in strips. Put the lemon in a plastic bag for another use.	1	
	In a saucepan, combine 1/2 cup verbena leaves, 1 cup whole milk, and lemon zest. Bring to a boil.	2	
	Remove milk from heat, cover, and allow to steep.	5	
	Strain the milk into a bowl. Discard verbena.	1	
	Separate the yolks from 4 eggs	2	
	In another bowl, beat an egg plus 4 egg yolks with 1/4 cup sugar and then add 1 cup cream	2	
	Add the steeped milk, combine, and then strain	2	
	Transfer the liquid to four ramekins	2	
	Place the ramekins in the deep-sided pan.	1	
	Add lukewarm water to the pan half-way up the sides of the ramekins	1	
	Bake until the liquid is set. Do not allow the water to boil.	25	
	Remove the ramekins from the water bath and allow to cool	15	
	When cool, cover and refrigerate until cold or up to 3 days	2	60
	Spread 2 tsp. of soft brown sugar over each ramekin	1	
	Using a butane kitchen torch, melt the sugar and brown it.	4	
	Allow to cool and then place a raspberry on each	10	
		Total	2 hr. 13 min

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