

# "Microwave Magic"

By:  
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Custards and puddings are a microwave specialty. Conventionally baked custard must be set in a pan of water, which provides moisture to prevent drying and browning. On the range top you must stir custard or pudding constantly to keep it free from lumps. Delicate custard microwaves smooth and creamy with a minimum of stirring, and the microwave oven does not dry or brown it. The variety of custards and puddings extends from simple desserts to dramatic looking presentations.

### BASIC CASSEROLE CUSTARD

- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups milk

In a 1 1/2 quart casserole beat eggs, sugar, vanilla, and salt with table fork, until very well blended and sugar is dissolved. Place milk in glass measure. Microwave at High 4 minutes, until scalded. Gradually add to egg mixture, stirring well. Cover with casserole lid. Microwave at LOW 10 to 13 minutes, rotating dish 1/4 turn every 3 minutes, until set. Sprinkle top with nutmeg before serving.

Note: Covering with casserole lid is important for success. Cool before serving. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

### CARAMEL FLAN

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 basic casserole custard

In 1 pt./glass measure place water and sugar, stirring well. Microwave at HIGH 10 to 12 minutes, until light but rich brown. (Do not let syrup get too dark before taking from oven as it continues to cook after it has been microwaved.) Pour 3/4 of caramel

syrup into 1 1/2 qt. casserole and quickly rotate casserole to coat bottom and about halfway up sides with caramel. Let cook to harden before adding custard. Drizzle remaining 1/4 of syrup in fine ribbons onto ungreased cookie sheet to harden.

Prepare custard in small mixing bowl. Pour or strain mixture into caramel lined casserole. Cover with casserole lid. Microwave at LOW 10 to 13 minutes, rotating dish 1/4 turn every 3 minutes, until set. Chill thoroughly. Unmold onto serving plate which has shallow rim. Crush the syrup which has hardened into a brittle and sprinkle in a wreath shape over top of flan.

NOTE: Covering with casserole lid is important for success. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

### FLOATING ISLANDS

- 1/3 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 3/4 cups milk
- 2 drops yellow food color (optional)
- 2 egg yolks, well beaten
- 2 egg whites
- 1/4 cup sugar

In a 2 quart casserole blend together sugar, cornstarch and salt until well mixed. Add milk and food coloring, stirring until well blended. Microwave at HIGH for 8 to 10 minutes until smooth and slightly thickened.

Stir a small amount of hot pudding quickly into yolks. Return egg mixture to hot pudding, mixing well. Microwave at MEDIUM HIGH 2 to 4 minutes, stirring after 1 minute, until slightly thickened.

Beat egg whites until foamy, on high speed of mixer. Gradually add sugar, beating to a stiff glossy meringue. Drop meringue immediately in 8 to 10 mounds over hot pudding. Microwave at MEDIUM

1 to 2 minutes to set meringues slightly. Chill before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

NOTE: There are two ways to microwave individual meringues. The traditional way to serve floating islands is to drop mounds of meringue over hot pudding. Microwave on MEDIUM 1 to 2 minutes. Serve with small, crisp cookies, if desired.

For best shape cook pudding for maximum time and microwave meringues separately. Place sheet of brown wrapping paper on a flat cookie sheet and drop 6 to 8 mounds of meringue in a circle on paper. Slide paper from cookie sheet into oven. Microwave at MEDIUM 1 to 2 minutes. Slide back onto cookie sheet and remove from oven to cool.

### BASIC BREAD PUDDING

- 4 cups bread cubes lightly packed into cup
- About 4 or 5 slices of bread
- 1/2 cup brown sugar (packed)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 2 cups milk
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 eggs, beaten

Spread bread cubes evenly in 8 inch round dish. Sprinkle evenly with brown sugar and salt, then raisins.

Measure milk into 1 qt. measuring cup. Add butter. Microwave at HIGH 4 minutes, until butter is melted and milk is warm. Rapidly stir in eggs with a fork and mix well. Pour over bread cubes in dish. Microwave at MEDIUM HIGH 9 to 12 minutes, rotating dish 1/2 turn after 6 minutes. When cooked, center may still be slightly soft, but it will set up as pudding cools. Serve warm or chilled. Makes about 6 servings.

### COOKING COMMERCIAL DRY PUDDING MIX

Since there is less evaporation in microwaving, microwaved pudding is often creamier in texture,

lighter in color and greater in volume than it is conventionally.

1 package (3 3/4 oz.) pudding or pie filling mix, NOT INSTANT

- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 1/2 cups milk

Empty pudding mix into 1 qt. glass measure. Add 1/2 cup milk and stir until all mix is moistened

and blended. Add 1 1/2 cups more milk and blend well. Microwave at HIGH 6 to 8 minutes, stirring thoroughly every 3 minutes. Pour into 4 or 5 serving dishes. Cover top of pudding with waxed paper or plastic wrap to prevent "SKIN" from forming on top, if desired. Serve cool. Makes 4 to 5 servings.



## Berks Society 3

Group #3 of the Berks County Society of Farm Women held its June meeting on the grounds of Ephrata Cloister. Prior to the business meeting, eighteen members and guests were given a guided tour of the buildings.

Six members of Group #3 attended the 40th anniversary of Group #2 at the Bethel Community Center, Bethel.

Members will provide refreshments at the Reichert auction on September 12.

Scenic River Days, Reading, will be held on July 30, 31, Aug. 1 and 2. Berks Heim Festival will be on September 12 and the County Convention on October 3.

The next meeting will be a family picnic at Joan Loeb's on July 28.

## Berks Executive Board

The Berks County Executive Board met recently at the Agricultural Center with 19 members in attendance.

President Joan Loeb opened the meeting.

Kim Casner of Group #9 led the devotions.

For roll call, members told how many children and grandchildren they have.

Doris Brown, chairlady of the Farm Women for Scenic River Days, finalized the plans for this event held July 30 through August 2.

Janet Schlegel reported that the Farm City Banquet will be held on

November 5 at the Riveredge.

The Farm Women will be making hamburgers at the Berks Heim Festival on September 12.

Plans are under way for the County Convention to be held at Haag's Hotel in Shartlesville on October 3.

Each group is planning something special for Farm Women's Day on October 14.

The next County Board meeting will be a covered dish picnic held at the home of president Joan Loeb.

Group #1 will be in charge of devotions at the next meeting.

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