

French Vanilla Ice Cream

Ingredients:

2 cups half and half
1 1/2 cups heavy cream
2 tsp vanilla extract
2 tbsp vanilla bean paste (or one vanilla bean split in half lengthwise, seeds scraped)
8 large egg yolks
3/4 cup white sugar
1/4 tsp salt

Directions:

In a heavy saucepan over medium high heat, combine half and half, cream, and vanilla bean paste (or pod and seeds) and warm over medium heat until it barely comes to a simmer about 4-5 minutes.

Meanwhile, vigorously whisk egg yolks, sugar, and salt until the mixture lightens in color and doubles in volume - about 2-3 minutes.

Remove the cream mixture from the heat. Whisking constantly, slowly add 1 cup of the warm cream mixture into the egg mixture and whisk until smooth.

Pour the resulting egg-cream mixture back into the saucepan place over medium-high heat and whisk constantly. Using a wooden spoon, stir until the mixture forms a custard thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon - only 1-2 more minutes. Do NOT let it boil.

Meanwhile, set up an ice bath in a bowl, and nest a smaller, heatproof bowl inside. Pour the warm mixture through a fine mesh sieve into the smaller bowl. Discard vanilla bean, if using. Stir the custard for 2-3 minutes until cool. Stir in vanilla extract.

Remove bowl from ice bath and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate until very cold - 4 hours or up to 3 days.

Pour the cold custard into an ice cream maker and churn according to manufacturer's settings. Transfer churned ice cream, after taking a bite of course, to a freezer safe container, and place a piece of parchment or wax paper over the top. Freeze until firm - about 2 hours, and serve.