

READY-TO-EAT
10-MINUTE DESSERTS
Quick, simple & delicious recipes for all occasions

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ANNA HELM BAXTER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUREN VOLVO

XTER

SIMPLE SYRUPS

Simple syrups are a great way to add sweetness, spice, unique flavours and moistness to desserts. Customise your syrups by using the ideas on the opposite page. They will keep for 3-6 months in airtight containers in the refrigerator – perfect for when surprise guests show up!

You can make thicker syrups in order to sweeten and flavour whipped cream by using the ratio 3 parts sugar to 1 part water. Add 1-2 tablespoons chilled syrup to 250 ml (8½ fl oz/1 cup) cream and whip to medium peaks, before tasting and adding more syrup if necessary.

SIMPLE SYRUP

makes 150 ml (5 fl oz/⅔ cup)

110 g (4 oz/½ cup plus 1 tablespoon) granulated sugar
125 ml (4 fl oz/½ cup) water

method

In a small saucepan, bring the sugar and water to the boil. Simmer gently until the sugar dissolves, then remove from the heat, add any flavour boosters and cool. Once cool, strain.

GREAT ADDITIONS

These flavour suggestions are a great way to boost your simple syrups. Peel zests with vegetable peelers and use whole spices to avoid cloudiness.

GINGER



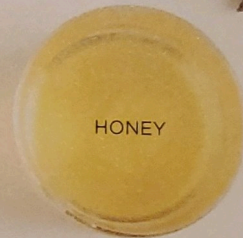
LEMON PEEL & MINT LEAVES



STAR ANISE



HONEY



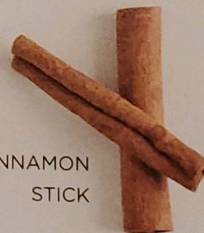
LIME PEEL & CARDAMOM



LEMONGRASS



CINNAMON STICK



ORANGE PEEL

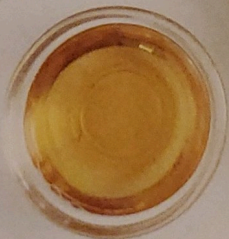


COFFEE BEANS



LIQUOR

RUM, PIMM'S, GRAND MARNIER, SCHNAPPS



ROSEMARY SPRIGS





SAUCES

Sometimes all it takes is a simple homemade sauce to elevate an otherwise basic dessert. All of these sauces can be made ahead of time and kept in the refrigerator in airtight containers for up to five days. Fruit sauces can be frozen for up to three months.

SALTED CARAMEL SAUCE

Time: 10 minutes



makes 325 ml (11 fl oz/1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cups)

200 g (7 oz/1 cup) granulated sugar

90 g (3 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz/ $\frac{1}{3}$ cup plus 1 tablespoon) unsalted butter, at room temperature

120 ml (4 fl oz/ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) double (heavy) cream, warmed

1 teaspoon coarse sea salt



method

Heat a large deep frying pan (skillet) over a high heat until very hot. Sprinkle over the sugar in an even layer and shake the pan vigorously as the sugar melts and turns deep amber around the edges. Remove from the heat and stir in the butter until it melts. Add the cream (it will bubble up), stirring. Stir in salt and immediately transfer to an airtight jar.

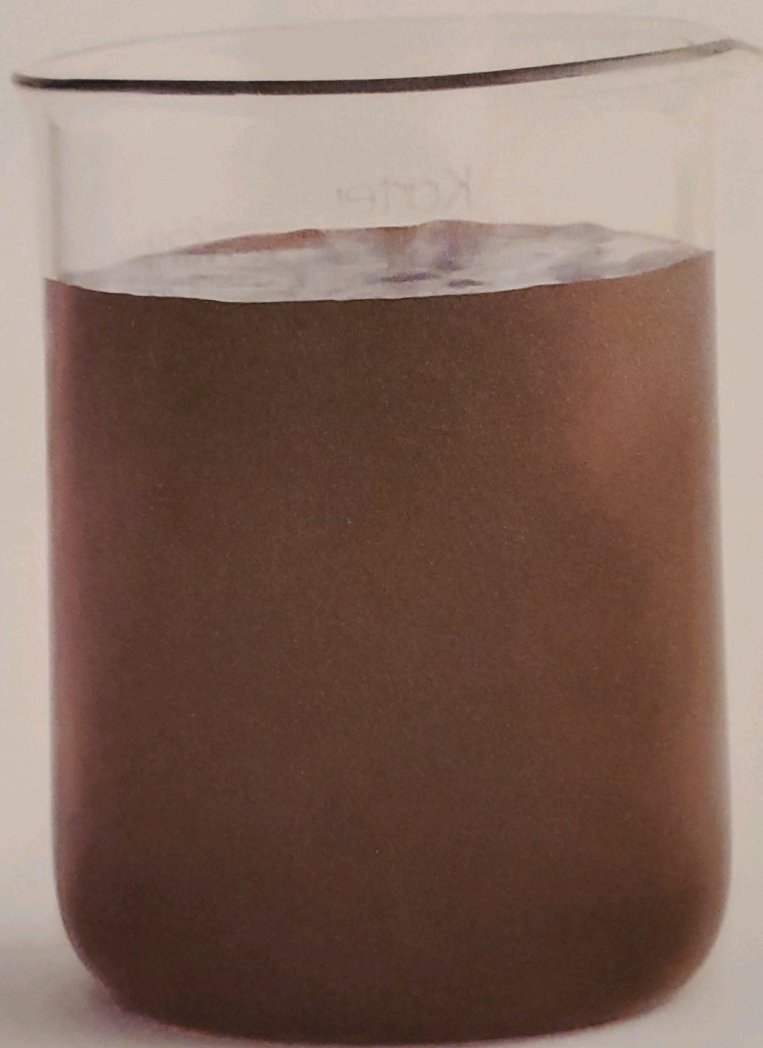
CHOCOLATE GANACHE

Time: 10 minutes



makes 450 ml (15 fl oz/scant 2 cups)

- 250 g (9 oz) good-quality dark chocolate, finely chopped
- 225 ml (8 fl oz/scant 1 cup) double (heavy) cream

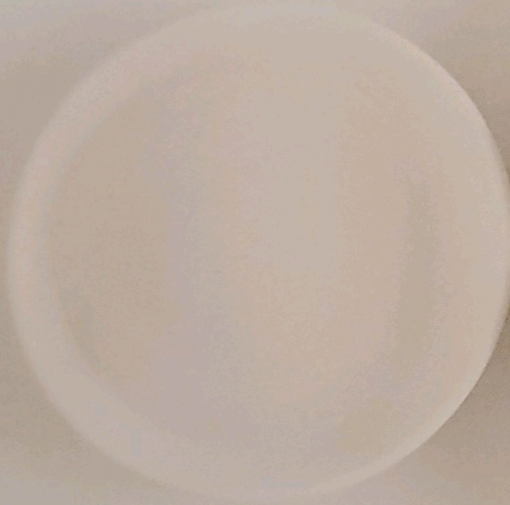


method

Place the chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Heat the cream in a small saucepan until hot and bubbles are forming around the edges of the pan. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate, stirring for 1 minute. Leave for 5 minutes, then stir until completely smooth.

BLUEBERRY SAUCE

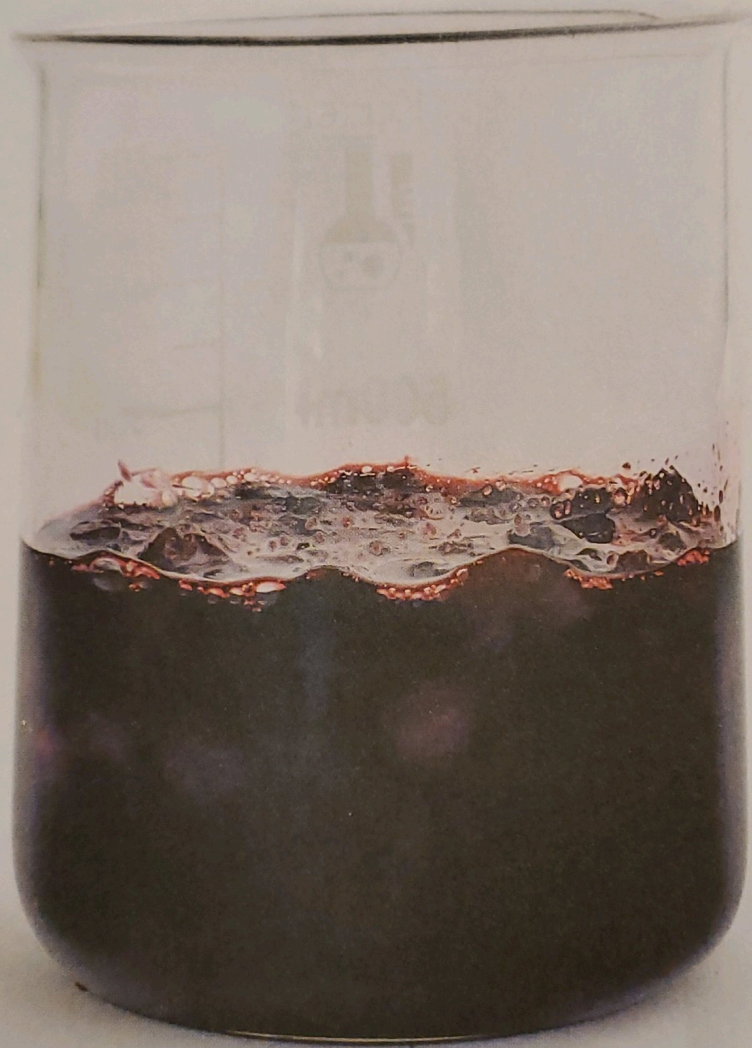
Time: 10 minutes



24

makes 300 ml (10 fl oz/1¼ cups)

- 250 g (9 oz) blueberries
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 50 ml (2 fl oz/3½ tablespoons) water
- 50 g (2 oz/¼ cup) granulated sugar



method

Bring the blueberries, lemon juice, water and sugar to the boil in a medium saucepan.
Reduce the heat and simmer until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes.

BLACK CHERRY SAUCE

Time: 10 minutes



makes 200 ml (7 fl oz/generous $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)

340 g (12 oz/scant 2 cups) pitted black (sweet) cherries (fresh or frozen; thawed if frozen), halved
50 g (2 oz/ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) granulated sugar
1 tablespoon water



method

Combine the cherries, sugar and water in a large saucepan. Bring to the boil, then simmer, stirring frequently, until the cherries break down and the liquid turns into a thick syrup.

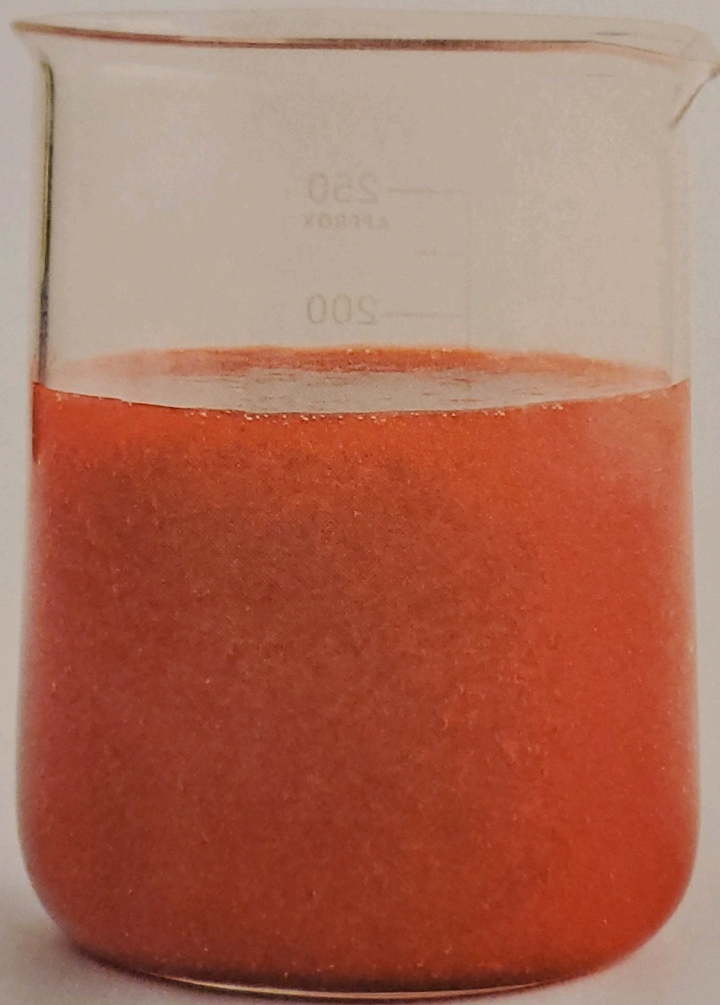
RASPBERRY COULIS

Time: 10 minutes



makes 175 ml (6 fl oz/ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)

- 250 g (9 oz) raspberries
- 2 tablespoons icing (confectioner's) sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice



method

Cook the berries, sugar and lemon juice in a medium frying pan (skillet), until the berries start to break down. Purée until smooth, then pass through a fine sieve to remove pips.

VANILLA CUSTARD

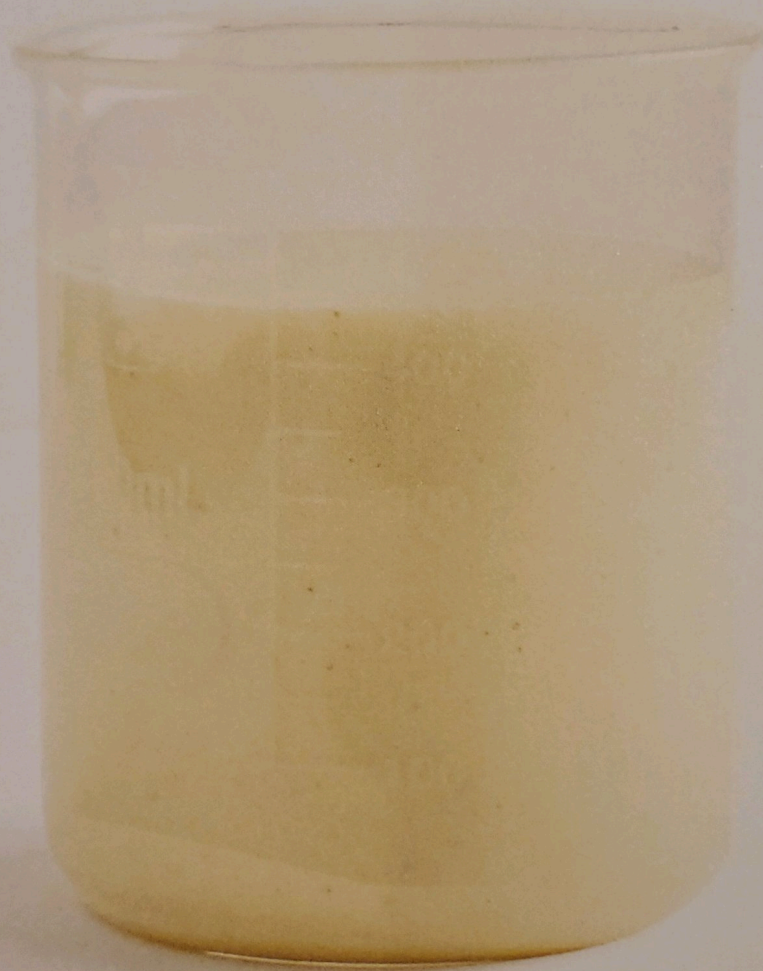
Time: 10 minutes



30

makes 500 ml (17 fl oz/2 cups)

- 400 ml (13 fl oz/1½ cups) whole milk
- 100 ml (3½ fl oz/⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon) double (heavy) cream
- 3 large egg yolks
- 2½ tablespoons cornflour (cornstarch)
- 55 g (2 oz/⅓ cup) golden caster (superfine) sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste



method

Heat the milk and cream in a medium, heavy saucepan over a medium heat until hot, but not boiling. Whisk the yolks, cornflour, sugar and vanilla in a bowl, until thick and creamy. Gradually add the hot milk, whisking constantly. Return to the pan and cook, stirring, over a medium heat until thickened. Add more cream, if liked.

SPICED RUM SAUCE

Time: 10 minutes



makes 150 ml (5 fl oz/2/3 cups)

- 100 g (3½ oz/½ cup) light brown sugar
- 30 g (1 oz/2 tablespoons) unsalted butter
- 60 ml (2 fl oz/¼ cup) double (heavy) cream
- 1 tablespoon spiced rum
- pinch of ground cinnamon



method

Heat the sugar and butter in a large frying pan (skillet) over a medium heat, until the sugar melts. Add the cream, rum and cinnamon and simmer gently for 1 minute.

INSTANT MANGO SORBET

Time: 5 minutes



52

serves 4

450 g (1 lb/1½ cups) frozen mango chunks

175-200 ml (6-7 fl oz/¾-generous ¾ cup) orange juice



method

In a powerful liquidiser, purée the frozen mango and 175 ml (6 fl oz/³/₄ cup) orange juice (adding more, if necessary) until smooth. Serve immediately or freeze until ready to use.

PINEAPPLE WITH SPICED RUM SAUCE

Time: 10 minutes



serves 4

- 1 small pineapple, peeled and sliced into thick rounds
- 4 scoops vanilla ice cream
- 1 quantity Spiced Rum Sauce (see page 32)



method

Heat a grill pan over a high heat or a grill (broiler) to high. Cook the pineapple rounds until lightly charred, 1-2 minutes per side. Transfer to plates, and top with ice cream and sauce.

GRILLED PEACH MELBA

Time: 10 minutes



serves 4

- 250 g (9 oz) raspberries
- 2 tablespoons golden caster (superfine) sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 4 peaches, halved and stoned
- 4 scoops vanilla ice cream



method

Toss together the raspberries, sugar and lemon juice. Heat a grill pan over a high heat and cook the peaches, cut-side down, for about 1-2 minutes until lightly charred. Turn and cook on the other side for 1 minute, then transfer to serving dishes. Top with ice cream and spoon over the macerated raspberries.

CHOCOLATE BANANA POPS

Time: 5 minutes



serves 4

175 g (6 oz/1 cup) milk chocolate buttons

40 g (1½ oz/⅓ cup) unsalted roasted peanuts, chopped

4 small peeled and frozen bananas, skewered with ice lolly sticks



method

Melt the chocolate in a tall, wide-mouthed, heatproof 750 ml (25 fl oz/1½ pint) jar. Dip the frozen bananas into the melted chocolate to coat two-thirds of the way. Quickly tap off any excess and immediately sprinkle with the chopped nuts. Transfer to a tray lined with greaseproof paper and either serve or return to the freezer.

CHEAT'S CRÈME BRÛLÉE

Time: 5 minutes



serves 4

1 quantity Vanilla Custard (see page 30), or 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) store-bought custard
8 teaspoons demerara sugar



method

Divide the custard among 4 x 175 ml (6 fl oz/ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup) ramekins and sprinkle evenly with sugar. Melt the sugar under a hot grill (broiler) or use a blowtorch.
For a hard topping, chill for 10-30 minutes before eating.

BANANA FLAMBÉE

Time: 10 minutes



150

serves 4

- 30 g (1 oz/2 tablespoons) unsalted butter
- 75 g (2½ oz/generous ⅓ cup) light brown sugar
- 4 bananas, peeled and halved
- 75 ml (2½ fl oz/⅓ cup) dark rum
- 1 x 500 ml (16 fl oz/1 pint) tub vanilla ice cream
- 20 g (¾ oz/2 tablespoons) roasted unsalted peanuts, chopped



method

Melt the butter in a frying pan (skillet) over a medium heat. Add the sugar, stirring for 1 minute. Add the bananas and cook for 1 minute on each side. Remove from the heat and add the rum. Return to the heat, shaking the pan (it will flame up). Once the flame subsides, serve with ice cream and peanuts.

CHOCOLATE FONDUE

Time: 5 minutes



158

serves 4

1 quantity Chocolate Ganache (see page 20)
selection of strawberries, chunks of sponge cake, pretzels, frozen grapes and marshmallows, for dipping



method

Warm the ganache over a low heat, then divide among 4 small ramekins.
Serve with the dipping ingredients and some small skewers.

CHOCOLATE TOASTS WITH CRÈME FRAÎCHE

Time: 10 minutes



162

serves 2

- ½ baguette, sliced diagonally into 1 cm (½ in) thick slices
- 25 g (1 oz/2 tablespoons) unsalted butter, softened
- 125 g (4 oz/½ cup) warmed Chocolate Ganache (see page 20)
- 4 tablespoons crème fraîche



method

Butter the bread on both sides, then add to a frying pan (skillet) set over a medium heat, cooking until toasted on both sides. Remove from the heat and pour over the ganache, turning the toasts to coat. Pile onto plates and top with crème fraîche.

NO-BAKE CHEESECAKE

Time: 10 minutes + Chilling: 2 hours



168

serves 6-8

- 100 g (3½ oz) chocolate wafer biscuits (cookies) (or Oreos with the cream filling removed), finely crushed
- 50 g (2 oz/3½ tablespoons) unsalted butter, melted
- 225 g (8 oz/1 cup) cream cheese, at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 60 ml (2 fl oz/¼ cup) very cold double (heavy) cream
- ½ teaspoon vanilla bean paste
- 1 quantity Blueberry Sauce (see page 24)

Not free



method

Combine the biscuit crumbs and butter and press into a 450 g (1 lb) loaf tin (pan) lined with baking paper so that the paper overhangs on 2 long sides. Use an electric hand mixer to beat the cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add the cream on low speed until incorporated, then increase the speed to medium and beat until stiff. Stir in the vanilla, then spread evenly over the crumb base. Chill for 2 hours. Top with sauce.

Comfort

NUTTY CHOCOLATE BANANA ICE CREAM

Time: 5 minutes



180

serves 4

- 4 small-medium frozen bananas
- 100 g (3½ oz/⅓ cup) Nutella® chocolate spread
- 20 g (¾ oz/3 tablespoons) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 20 g (¾ oz/2½ tablespoons) toasted hazelnuts, lightly crushed



method

Purée together the bananas, Nutella® and cocoa powder in a food processor. Spoon into bowls and top with hazelnuts to serve.