

PAIN PERDU (REAL FRENCH TOAST)

F MEDIUM

Last Modified: 12/30/2019

PREP: 13+ Hrs

COOK: 25 Min

OVEN: 450

BREAKFAST

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

QUA	MEASURE	INGREDIENT	PROCESS
1	Loaf	Crusty Country Bread (NOT Sourdough)	Old
3	Tbsp	Unsalted Butter	

EGG CUSTARD MIX

1	Cup	Heavy Cream	
1/3	Cup	Granulated Sugar	
1/4	Cup	Brandy (E&J VSOP Reserve)	
1	Tsp	Kosher Salt	
6	Large	Eggs	Beaten
1/8	Tsp	Vanilla Extract	

OR: MAKE THE GRANULATED SUGAR INTO "VANILLA SUGAR" BY ADDING IN

1	Whole	Vanilla Bean (Cut Length To Fit)	Split & Cut
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TOPPING

4	Pinches	Granulated Sugar	
4	Pinches	All Purpose Flour	

FOR SERVING

		Powdered Confectioners Sugar	
		Unsalted Butter	
		Pure Maple Syrup	
OR			
		Any Syrup of Your Choice	
	Optional	Fresh Fruit (Blueberries, Raspberries, Etc.)	

PREPARATION

FACTOID	Pain Perdu is French for "Lost Bread". The Bread you want to use here is dried out and hardened to the point where you are almost ready to throw it in the trash (NOT moldy in ANY way). A very crusty, stiff exterior is desirable. Do <u>NOT</u> use a Sourdough type of Bread for this dish. The Sourdough Bread texture is too dense to easily soak up the Egg Custard which ends up resulting in a NASTY dry piece of French Toast.
FACTOID	This Recipe has also been served as a very popular Desert in several restaurants throughout the world. I first had it for breakfast in the 5 star Le Meurice Hotel in Paris. See Recipe: Beef - Tenderloin - Le Meurice for more details
HINTS	I use Meijer unsliced Italian Bread Loaves for this. Two loaves will make 12 angled slices that are 1 1/2 inches thick. It takes a triple batch of the Egg Custard Mix to properly soak the 12 slices.
HINTS	Most of the Custard Mix should be soaked up into the Bread Slices by morning. You may have to "adjust" the liquid volume up or down to fit the type and density of the Bread you are using.

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HINTS	You may find that our "American" Bread tends to develop mold spots long before it is ready to use. Since most "whole specialty loaves" do NOT contain any added preservatives, storing them inside a closed paper sack will help to keep them from picking up mold spores. Storage AT ALL in plastic bags is a NO - NO!
TOOLS	1) Medium Mixing Bowl 2) 9" x 13" Glass Baking Dish 3) Large Cast Iron Skillet
PREP	2 Days Before: VANILLA SUGAR: If you have the time, it is great to make all of the Granulated Sugar for this recipe into "Vanilla Sugar" in place of using the Vanilla Extract. TO MAKE: Split a whole Vanilla Bean in half lengthwise (do NOT scrape). Add the halves to 1/2 + cups of Granulated Sugar in a covered glass Jar. Let stand at room temperature for 2 days, shake to mix every once in a while. Remove and discard the Vanilla Bean pieces before using the Sugar.
1	The Day Before: Slice the Bread into equal, large slices (NO round ends), with each slice being around 2 inches thick. Slice them on the bias in order to get the very large oblong slices desired here. Place the Bread Slices in a flat bottomed glass baking dish, large enough to hold all of them so that they are not touching each other.
2	The Day Before: Whisk together the Cream, Vanilla, Sugar, Brandy, Salt and Eggs (or use a blender). Pour all of it over the top of the Bread Slices. Let it sit for about 25 minutes. Turn the Bread Slices over in order to ensure more complete absorption. Cover the dish completely with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, carefully turn the Bread Slices over once more and allow them to set un-refrigerated for 1/2 hour.
3	Preheat the oven to 450 degrees with a rack near the center. Lightly sprinkle a little Flour and Granulated Sugar Topping on top of the Bread Slices. In a cast iron skillet large enough to hold the Bread Slices over medium high heat, add in the Butter.
4	When the foaming from the Butter subsides, using large tongs, place the Custard soaked Bread Slices carefully in the skillet and cook on one side only until they are very lightly browned, about 4 minutes.
5	Turn over the Bread Slices and immediately place the skillet in the center of the oven. Bake until cooked through (they will puff up) yet, still be Custardy in the middle, for 10 to 15 minutes. The tops will brown quite a bit darker.
SERVE	Place a Slice on a warm individual serving plate, sprinkle the top liberally with Confectioners Powdered Sugar, Place a thick Pat of Butter on top and drizzle it liberally with warmed Maple Syrup. You may optionally place a ring of several small fresh Fruit(s) around the outside of the slice. Serve while hot with a little extra Butter and Maple Syrup on the side.

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