

Like most French country fare, clafoutis are simple to make. But they aren't quite as easy to define. Their name derives from a word meaning "to fill" in the dialect of Limousin, where they were created. Made from a dense, crepe-like batter and fresh cherries (or other stone fruits), clafoutis have a delightfully moist, chewy texture that is something like cake, something like custard. As they bake, the batter forms a golden crust and the cherries burst, forming puddles of thick syrup. Topped with whipped cream, they are an ideal finish for a casual outdoor dinner.

Ingredients

Serves 6

- 3 tablespoons sliced almonds
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup plus 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 large whole eggs
- 3 large egg yolks
- 1 1/4 cups heavy cream
- 1 vanilla bean, split and scraped
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1 pound fresh, ripe cherries, stemmed and pitted
- 1/4 cup kirsch or brandy, optional

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place sliced almonds in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Toast until they are fragrant, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Use 1 tablespoon melted butter to coat six 4 1/2-by-1 3/4 inch round baking dishes, and set aside.
2. Place flour, 2/3 cup sugar, salt, and almonds in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade; pulse until mixture is finely ground. Transfer to a medium bowl. Add eggs, egg yolks, 3/4 cup cream, vanilla scrapings, and lemon zest, and whisk to combine. Place in refrigerator, and let rest 30 minutes.
3. Place cherries in a medium bowl; add kirsch, if using, and let macerate 30 minutes. Divide among dishes. Whisk remaining butter into batter; pour batter over cherries, and place dishes on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake 20 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining sugar; bake until tops are golden and bubbling, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.
4. Whip remaining 1/2 cup cream until soft peaks form. Serve clafoutis warm or at room temperature, topped with whipped cream.