



## Scott Hodges' Chocolate Espresso Crème Brulee

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon instant espresso powder
- 5 ounces bittersweet chocolate
- 6 egg yolks
- 3 tablespoons granulated white sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ cup granulated white sugar or raw sugar (for the caramelized tops)
- Espresso coffee bean candies for garnish

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Combine cream and espresso powder in a heavy, medium saucepan. Bring to a simmer, whisking to dissolve espresso powder. Remove from heat. Break up chocolate and add to hot cream mixture, whisking until smooth. Set aside. Whisk yolks, sugar, and vanilla in a large bowl until well blended. Gradually whisk in chocolate mixture. Strain into a clean bowl, skimming off any foam or bubbles.

Divide mixture among six ramekins or custard cups. Place in a water bath and bake until set around the edges, but still loose in the center, about 40 to 50 minutes. Remove from the oven and leave in the water bath until cooled. Remove cups from water bath.

The custard can be served warm or chilled. To chill, refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or up to 2 days. When ready to serve, sprinkle about 2 teaspoons of sugar over each custard. For best results, use a small, hand-held torch to melt sugar. If you don't have a torch, place under the broiler until sugar melts.

To serve warm, dry off bottoms of ramekins as soon as you remove them from the hot water bath, and present them plain.

Garnish with a sprinkling of coffee-bean candies. Serves 6.