Fig Bread Pudding

http://userealbutter.com/2019/10/07/fig-bread-pudding-recipe/ adapted from this recipe on Chowhound

3 cups fresh figs, stemmed and chopped

1/4 cup brandy

3 tbsps unsalted butter, softened

5 slices cinnamon bread (you can use regular bread instead of cinnamon)

1/4 cup brown sugar

2 eggs, beaten

1 cup whole milk

1 cup heavy cream

1 tbsp lemon juice

1 tsp lemon zest, grated

1 tsp vanilla extract

Combine the figs and brandy in a bowl. Toss to coat the figs and let sit for 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter your 7×10-inch baking dish (to make a 9×13-inch pudding, double the recipe). Butter each slice of bread (I buttered both sides). Cut the bread into 1-inch cubes. Stir the brown sugar and beaten eggs together in a medium bowl or 1-quart measuring cup. Whisk the milk, cream, lemon juice, lemon zest, and vanilla extract into the egg mixture. In a large bowl, toss the bread with the figs. Spread the bread and figs into your baking dish. Pour the custard evenly over the bread. Bake* the bread pudding on a foil-lined baking sheet (in case of overflow) for 50-70 minutes until the center is golden and springs back when you gently push on it. Remove from heat. Serve warm with ice cream, whipped cream, or crème anglaise. Serves 6.

*For a more consistent and gentle bake, you can bake the bread pudding in a water bath by setting the pan in a much larger pan and filling the larger pan with boiling water to about 1 inch below the top of the smaller pan. Then proceed to bake as in the instructions.