

Strawberry Semifreddo

<http://userealbutter.com/2015/04/02/strawberry-semifreddo-recipe/>
from *The Secrets of Baking* by Sherry Yard

strawberry purée

2 pts. (24 oz.) strawberries, rinsed, hulled, and halved
2 tbsps granulated sugar
2 tbsps Grand Marnier
1 tbsp lemon juice, fresh squeezed

crust (optional)

2 cups (6-8 oz.) vanilla cookie crumbs or graham cracker crumbs
6 tbsps (3 oz.) granulated sugar
6 tbsps (3 oz.) unsalted butter, melted
pinch of salt

custard

8 oz. whole milk
4 large egg yolks
7 tbsps (3.5 oz) granulated sugar
pinch of salt

fluffy stuff

2 large egg whites
pinch of cream of tartar
2 tbsps granulated sugar
4 oz. mascarpone cheese
8 oz. heavy cream

Make the strawberry purée: Toss the strawberries, 2 tablespoons of sugar, Grand Marnier, and lemon juice together in a large bowl. Set aside and let macerate at room temperature for at least 20 minutes. Pour the contents of the bowl into a food processor or blender and purée until smooth. Set aside.

Form the crust: This part is optional. If you don't want a crust with your semifreddo, skip to the next section. Combine the cookie crumbs, 6 tablespoons of sugar (reduce as desired), melted butter, and salt in a large bowl. Mix together until uniform in texture. Press crust crumbs into the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan or ring mold(s) to 1/2-inch depth. Adjust the crust depth accordingly if you are using ring molds smaller than 9-inch diameter. Even the surface with a wide-bottom glass. Set aside.

Make the custard: Heat the milk in a medium saucepan until it comes to a simmer. Remove from heat. Whisk the egg yolks, 7 tablespoons of sugar, and a pinch of salt together in a medium bowl. Temper the yolks by adding 1/4 cup of the hot milk into the mixture while continuously whisking to avoid cooking the yolks. Whisk in the rest of the hot milk. Scrape the mixture back into the saucepan and set over medium heat, stirring

constantly (get the corners of the pan, too). When the mixture thickens and coats the back of a spoon (nappe consistency), remove from heat. Stir in the strawberry purée. Set the strawberry custard over an ice bath and stir occasionally until cooled. Cover with plastic wrap to avoid forming a skin.

Fluffy stuff: Whip the egg whites on high speed until foamy (about 30 seconds). Add the cream of tartar and continue to whip until the whites reach the soft peaks stage. Add the sugar and whip to medium peaks. Transfer the whipped whites to another bowl unless you have 2 bowls for your mixer. In the same bowl that you used to whip the egg whites (or a new bowl), combine the mascarpone and cream. Whip on medium speed for no more than 30 seconds until soft peaks. Refrigerate the cream mixture.

Assembly: Fold a quarter of the whipped egg whites into the strawberry custard base. Use big strokes, scooping along the bottom of the bowl and then bringing custard up and over the whites. Continue until mostly blended. Fold in the remaining egg whites trying not to deflate too much of the volume (some deflation is fine). When the whites are partially mixed into the custard, fold the mascarpone-cream mixture into the custard until blended. Pour the semifreddo mixture into your pan or molds and freeze until solid (a few hours or more). If you have leftover semifreddo, pour it into a vessel and freeze. Unmold the semifreddo before serving – you can use a blowtorch (CAREFULLY) if needed, but I found the warmth of my hands was enough to get the semifreddo to release. Wrap in plastic and store in the freezer for up to 2 weeks. Serves 12 (makes 8 cups of semifreddo filling).