



Semifreddo of burnt almonds with balsamic cherries

1 Prepare the burnt almonds: Line a baking tray with parchment paper. Boil the water, sugar, vanilla sugar, cinnamon in a large saucepan. Add the almonds and let cook over medium to high heat while stirring occasionally. The liquid will have evaporated after 5-8 minutes and the sugar will cover the almonds with a dry crust. Now reduce the temperature and keep stirring until the sugar turns liquid again and coats all of the almonds evenly as caramel. Pour onto the prepared tray. Quickly separate the almonds from each other with two forks (not with your fingers, very hot!) and let them cool (they keep for several days in an airtight container). Put them (in several batches) into a freezer bag and break into relatively fine crunch with the help of a rolling pin or a heavy pan. Or use a food processor for this step.

2 For the semifreddo put the egg yolks into a large metal bowl together with the sugar and cognac. Whisk over a hot [bain-marie](#) - this rarely takes more than 4 minutes, even by hand. The mixture will turn foamy, then creamy. Set the bowl into ice-cold water and keep beating until the egg mixture has cooled down and slightly thickened. Stir in about 40 g of the burnt almond crunch. In a separate bowl beat the whipping cream until stiff. First fold in one-third of it into the egg concoction, then gently fold the rest into it so that it still remains fluffy. Fill into the ramekins and freeze for at least 4 hours.

3 Dip the ramekins into hot water for a few seconds (I use Timbale molds - aka Dariole/ Baba au rhum molds - for my semifreddos, because the metal conducts the hot temperature very well and unmolding is easy). Then run a knife along the edge and loosen the semifreddo before turning it upside down on a plate. Pour the rest of the burnt almond crunch in a smaller bowl and - this is a bit tricky - roll the semifreddo in it until evenly covered



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Recipe source: own creation

Prep time: about 45 minutes, plus 4 hours of freezing

Ingredients (serves 4):

Burnt almonds

- * 50 ml water
- * 60 g sugar
- * 1 tbsp vanilla sugar
- * 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- * 100 g whole almonds (with skins)

Semifreddo

- * 4 large egg yolks
- * 40 g white sugar or vanilla sugar (or half/ half)
- * 1 tbsp cognac
- * burnt almonds (from above)
- * 200 g whipping cream

Balsamic cherries

- * ~40 cherries (canned, pitted)
- * 200 ml cherry juice
- * 2-3 tbsp vanilla sugar
- * 2-3 tbsp aged balsamic vinegar
- * 1-2 tbsp cornstarch
- * 2-3 tbsp water
- *
- * plus: 4 ramekins of 100-120 ml



(you may have to lightly press the crunch onto the semifreddo). Place on a cling film covered cutting board or plate and put back in the freezer for 10 to 15 minutes.

4 Prepare the balsamic cherries just before serving: Heat the cherries, cherry juice and vanilla sugar in a saucepan and let boil until the sugar has dissolved. Season to taste with a real good and thick aged balsamic vinegar. In a small bowl stir the cornstarch together with 2-3 tbsp of cold water until smooth before mixing it into the cherries, which should now be simmering (only add one teaspoon after another of the cornstarch liquid, stop as soon as the desired consistency is reached).

5 Place the almond crunch covered semifreddo on the serving plate and decorate with some hot cherries before serving. Let stand for some minutes (hard, I know...) to reach perfect creaminess. The semifreddo can be easily kept in the freezer compartment for several days. It's a dessert you can make in advance for special occasions.



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