



APRICOT SOUFFLÉ

Makes 8 servings.

Soufflés have a reputation for being difficult to make and a dessert you have to pull together at the last minute. I think this recipe is something of a breakthrough. You can prepare parts of the dessert well in advance. And it's well worth the effort, as this is a heavenly dish—light and not too sweet. A slightly different version of this recipe first appeared in my cookbook, Helen Nash's New Kosher Cuisine. Leftovers are delicious cold, or even frozen.

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ pound dried California apricots (See Note)
- 1½ cups of cold water
- 5 tablespoon sugar plus 2 tablespoon for dusting the ramekins
- 1½ tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon unsalted margarine for greasing the ramekins or soufflé dish
- Whites from 3 large eggs, at room temperature (See Note)

PREPARATION

1. Place apricots and cold water in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, lower the heat and cook, covered, for 15 minutes or until the apricots are soft.
2. Place in a Vitamix, add 4 tablespoons of sugar and 1 tablespoon of lemon juice. Purée until very smooth. Transfer to a container and cool. I generally freeze the purée to have on hand.
3. Grease 8 -½-cup ramekins and sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of sugar (See Note). Invert the ramekins and tap to remove the excess sugar. Place in a 9-inch by 13-inch by 2-inch baking

pan and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

4. Preheat the oven to 375° F.
5. Place the egg whites in the bowl of an electric stand mixer. Using the balloon-whisk attachment, beat them at high speed until they form soft peaks. Gradually add the remaining tablespoon of sugar and the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of lemon juice. Continue beating until the egg whites form stiff, shiny peaks.
6. With a rubber spatula, fold half of the whites into the apricot purée. Now reverse the process, pouring the apricot purée over the egg whites. Gently fold the two mixtures together, making a motion like a figure eight with the spatula, until most of the whites have disappeared. Take care not to over blend. Spoon the batter into the greased ramekins. If you are not baking the soufflés immediately, they will keep for half an hour in the refrigerator.
7. When ready to bake, pour enough boiling water into the baking pan to reach a third of the way up the sides of the ramekins.
8. Place the pan in the center rack of the oven and bake for 13-15 minutes. The soufflé will rise. Serve right away.
9. If you are not ready to serve the soufflés, you can leave them in a turned-off oven for about 10 minutes.

NOTE:

I use California apricots, they are less sweet than the other varieties.

You can also bake the soufflé in a 1-quart soufflé dish and follow the above instructions. Bake for 22 to 25 minutes.

It is easier to separate the eggs straight from the refrigerator, while they are cold, as the egg yolks tend to break as they warm. Make sure that the whites have come to room temperature before beating.