

Corn Flans with Tomato Corn Relish

Serves 4

For flans

4 ears fresh corn, shucked, 3 ears for flan and 1 ear for relish
 $\frac{2}{3}$ c. 1% milk (or use whole milk or half and half for richer custard)
1 garlic clove, chopped (optional)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c. Grated Parmesan cheese
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Salt
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. cayenne
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. smoked paprika
2 large eggs
Freshly ground pepper to taste

For relish

Reserved corn kernels from 1 ear of corn
6 oz. small grape or cherry tomatoes, halved or quartered (such as Sweet 100's)
 $\frac{1}{3}$ c. minced red onion (substitute minced scallion)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c. finely chopped cured black olives (optional)
1 Tbl. chopped fresh basil (or substitute oregano, chives, cilantro or other herb)
2 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp. red wine or sherry vinegar

Butter 4 (4- to 6-oz) ramekins. Line the bottom of each with a round of waxed or parchment paper. Butter the paper. Set aside.

Flan:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking pan large enough to hold the ramekins with two layers of kitchen towel. Set aside.

Cook shucked corn in a pot of boiling water until tender, about 5 minutes. Drain and cool. Cut off kernels with a sharp knife into a bowl, scraping ears with the back of the knife to extract corn "milk." Reserve the corn from 1 ear for relish and purée remainder in a blender with milk and garlic until smooth. If you wish a silky smooth flan, force corn purée through a fine sieve into a bowl, discarding skins. This step is optional.

Whisk together eggs, salt, paprika, pepper, cayenne and cheese until blended. Whisk in corn purée. Pour flan mixture into prepared ramekins and set in baking pan on top of kitchen towels. Pour enough hot water in the pan to reach halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake until set, about 45 minutes (begin checking after 35 minutes) or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Remove ramekins from water bath and cool on a rack until room temperature. Cover and chill until cold, about 2 hours. Run a thin knife around edge of each flan and invert onto serving plates. Remove paper. You can also serve these at room temperature without chilling.

Relish:

Stir together corn, tomatoes, onion, olives if using and basil or whatever herb you have chosen. Whisk together oil and vinegar and stir into tomato mix and season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon relish decoratively over flans for garnish.

Note: Flans left in ramekins and reserved corn for relish may be chilled, covered, up to 1 day. These can also be served room temperature. Mix relish no more than 2 hours ahead.