

Chef's Corner



FLUFFY RICOTTA PANCAKES

- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup semolina flour
(can use all-purpose flour)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon Kosher salt
- 4 large eggs, room temperature and separated
- 1 recipe homemade ricotta cheese (about 1 cup)
- 1 tablespoon melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Fresh raspberries
- Powdered sugar for dusting
- Butter for griddle

In a small bowl, combine flours, baking powder and salt. In a larger bowl, whisk together egg yolks, melted butter, vanilla extract, ricotta cheese and buttermilk. Add flour mixture and stir until just combined. In another bowl (preferably copper) beat egg whites until soft peaks appear. Add sugar to whites and whisk to combine. Gently fold egg whites into ricotta mixture. Heat griddle over medium heat and add butter. Drop batter using a 1/3-cup measure to form pancakes. Place a few raspberries on top of each pancake. Cook until golden on both sides, about 2 minutes per side. Serve immediately with liberal dusting of powdered sugar and lemon curd on the side.

Ricotta pancakes perfect for Mother's Day or Shavuot

Even if you work outside the home full time, mom duties are still 24/7. We have an 11-year-old son with a very busy schedule. He plays several sports, studies hard at school, practices on the piano every day and studies Hebrew to prepare for his bar mitzvah.

It seems like just yesterday I was holding his hand and walking him to elementary school where I would kiss him good-bye and he would reluctantly let go of my hand to go inside. Now, he is eager to take on any challenge, and kissing and cuddling mostly happen when no one else is around. But he never forgets me on Mother's Day. I keep his past Mother's Day cards tucked away to glance at every now and then. This one is from around fourth grade:

Happy Mother's Day

*My mother encourages
My mother's a dream
My mother is amazing
And she's always on my team
My mother cooks
My mother cleans
My mother is a lean machine
And she never, ever, is mean
I Love you Mom!*

Isn't that about the most poetic thing you have ever read! OK, so he's no Maya Angelou, but it made me well up. So, any kids out there feel free to plagiarize!

This recipe is for my mother-in-law Joanne. She is a loving, supportive mom and still refers to her son as "Buddy Boy," even now that he is in his 50s! That's just what Jewish moms do.

Joanne loves raspberries and lemon, so I have combined them to make these fluffy and delicious ricotta pancakes. It is super easy to make your own ricotta cheese and fresh lemon curd and they taste so much better than the kind you buy in stores. The buttermilk adds a rich and tangy flavor that makes these pancakes very special. The sweet dusting of powdered sugar balances the tart lemon curd making this a spectacular breakfast in bed for Mother's Day. It also makes a great dairy meal to celebrate Shavuot.



FRESH LEMON CURD

- 4 lemons
- 1½ cups sugar
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 4 eggs
- ½ cup lemon juice
- Pinch of Kosher salt

Use a vegetable peeler to remove the zest from three of the lemons. Juice all lemons to create ½ cup juice and set aside. Place lemon zest and sugar in bowl of food processor. Pulse until zest is very finely minced into sugar. Cream the butter and sugar in a medium bowl. Add eggs, one at a time then add lemon juice and salt. Pour mixture into a 2-quart saucepan and cook over low heat stirring constantly until mixture thickens, about 10 minutes. Pour through a strainer into a bowl pushing on solids as much as possible. Cool or refrigerate.

HOMEMADE RICOTTA CHEESE

- 4 cups whole milk
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Kosher salt to taste
- Deep fry thermometer
- Cheesecloth

Stack four large squares of cheesecloth in a colander, leaving overhang. Place over a bowl. Combine milk and buttermilk in heavy large pot. Attach deep-fry thermometer to side of pot. Place pot over high heat. Stir occasionally. As the mixture heats, curds (small clumps) will begin to form. When thermometer registers 175° to 180°, curds will separate from whey (liquid) and float to the top. Turn off heat.

Using a large slotted spoon or skimmer, transfer curds to prepared colander. Gather cheesecloth around ricotta. Press gently, releasing some liquid (don't press too much or the cheese could be too dry). Return ball of cheese to colander and let rest 20 minutes. Transfer ricotta to medium bowl. Sprinkle with kosher salt; mix gently. Can be made one day ahead.



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