

White Chocolate Cranberry Pecan Bread Pudding

By Jules, Boston Mamas Guest Contributor



I realize that the holidays are a tough time for those trying to watch calories, but I fully believe in indulging on special occasions, which include snowstorms and cozy Sunday afternoons. This bread pudding is a must-try; a comforting, heady dessert that will satisfy your wish for something rich, creamy, tart, crunchy, and seasonal. You can use egg substitute if you are watching your cholesterol, and I have swapped the classic whole milk and cream for mostly skim milk with some heavy cream to save a few calories. As with most of my desserts, I think this is served best with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or fresh whipped cream, but fear not, this dessert is bold enough to stand on its own.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups crusty bread, cubed into about 1" pieces
- 3 cups skim milk
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 6 oz. white chocolate, chopped into large chunks
- 6 oz. lightly toasted pecans, chopped



1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Boil water and keep simmering on the side.
2. In large mixing bowl, combine milk and cream. Whisk in sugar, salt, eggs, and vanilla until well combined. Stir in cranberries, white chocolate and pecans, reserving a handful of pecans for garnish.
3. Butter an 8x12 inch glass baking dish (or similar size). Place cubed bread in baking dish and pour milk mixture over bread. Stir well and press bread down slightly, so it is mostly covered with milk mixture. Soak bread in milk mixture for at least 25 minutes.
4. Place baking dish in larger roasting pan to create a *bain marie* (water bath). Place roasting pan in the oven and carefully pour hot water in roasting pan, until it is about halfway to the top of baking dish.
5. Bake for 60 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Sprinkle with remaining pecans. Serve with ice cream or whipped cream.