

Spiced Midnight Cocoa Flan

Yield: 4 Ramekins

Prep time: 20 mins | **Cook time:** 15-20 mins | **Chill time:** 60 mins

Equipment

- Steam oven
- Gas stove
- Chinoise
- 4 Ramekins
- Brulee torch

Ingredients

Ingredient	Quantity	Notes
70% Dark Chocolate	100g	Finely chopped
Whole Milk	200g	
Heavy Cream	200g	
Egg Yolks	80g	Approx. 4-5 large yolks
Granulated Sugar	40g	For the custard base
Superfine Sugar	As needed	For torching the tops
Cinnamon Stick	1 whole	Ceylon preferred
Star Anise	1 pod	
Cayenne Pepper	1/8 tsp	Adjust to heat preference
Sea Salt	1g	Approx. 1 large pinch

Instructions

- Mise en place:** Weigh out all ingredients and finely chop the dark chocolate. Place the chopped chocolate into a medium heat-proof mixing bowl.
- Preheat:** Set your steam oven to **100°C (212°F)** at 100% humidity.
- Infuse the Dairy:** In a saucepan on the gas stove, combine the milk, heavy cream, cinnamon stick, star anise, cayenne pepper, and sea salt. Heat gently over medium heat until it reaches a bare simmer (do not boil). Remove from heat, cover, and let steep for 15 minutes.
- Melt the Chocolate:** Return the infused dairy to a quick simmer. Pour it through your chinoise directly over the chopped chocolate to catch the whole spices. Let sit for 1 minute, then whisk gently until smooth and fully emulsified.
- Prepare Yolks:** In a separate bowl, gently whisk the egg yolks and the 40g of granulated sugar until just combined. Avoid whipping too much air into the mixture.
- Temper:** Slowly pour the warm chocolate mixture into the egg yolks, whisking continuously to temper the eggs without scrambling them.
- Final Strain:** Pass the entire custard base through the chinoise one more time into a pouring jug. This ensures a perfectly silky texture.
- Steam:** Divide the base evenly among the 4 ramekins. Place them directly on the wire rack in the steam oven. Cook for 15–20 minutes. The edges should be set, but the centers should still have a slight jiggle.
- Chill:** Remove from the oven. Let cool briefly, then transfer to the refrigerator (or use a speed-cool function) for at least 1 hour until fully firm.
- Brulee:** Just before serving, sprinkle an even, thin layer of superfine sugar over the top of each flan. Melt with your brulee torch. For the best "crack," apply a second thin layer of sugar and torch again.