

PISTACHIO & STRAWBERRY VERRINES

A recipe by **FoodNouveau**

INGREDIENTS

Makes 6 to 8 verrines

For the pistachio paste

¾ cup [180 ml] unsalted pistachio nuts, shelled, peeled
(see note)

1/3 cup [80 ml] sugar

¼ cup [60 ml] whole milk

For the pistachio cream

2 cups [500 ml] whole milk

2 egg yolks

¼ cup [60 ml] sugar

2 tbsp [30 ml] cornstarch

pinch of salt

1 tsp [5 ml] vanilla extract

For the macerated strawberries

1 pint [500 ml] fresh strawberries

1 tbsp [15 ml] sugar

¼ vanilla pod

For the pistachio crumble

¼ cup [60 ml] all purpose flour

¼ cup [60 ml] sugar

¼ cup [60 ml] unsalted pistachio nuts, shelled, chopped finely

2 tbsp [30 ml] butter, cold and cubed

METHOD

To make the pistachio paste: Bring a small pot of water to a boil. Add the shelled pistachios and simmer 2 minutes. Drain and rinse the nuts under cold water to cool them completely. Dry the nuts with paper towels when put them in the bowl of a food processor. Add the sugar and pulse until the pistachios are finely ground. Add the milk and process until the mixture is as smooth and creamy as the food processor will make it (some tiny pistachio bits will remain and that's ok).

To make the pistachio cream: Pour the milk in a medium saucepan, add the pistachio paste, and heat until the mixture simmers (no need to bring it to a full boil). While the milk mixture is heating up, whisk the egg yolks, sugar, cornstarch, and salt together in a medium mixing bowl. The mixture will be thick but make sure to whisk until it's smooth (it'll take just a minute or two).

When the milk mixture simmers, remove from the heat. Ladle about ½ cup [125 ml] hot milk and slowly pour it into the egg mixture. **Make sure to whisk constantly while you slowly pour in the hot milk**, this will ensure the eggs heat up



Recipe Credit: Marie Asselin. Previously published in French by *Fou des foodies*.

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gradually and don't turn into scrambled eggs. Whisk another ½ cup [125 ml] hot milk into the egg mixture. Pour the egg mixture back into the saucepan containing the rest of the hot milk mixture, keeping on whisking while doing so. Put the saucepan back over low heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the cream thickens to a pudding consistency, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Divide the pistachio among six to eight verrines (each glass should be filled to a generous third). Cover with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator until the cream is completely cool, about 2 hours.

To make the pistachio crumble: Preheat the oven to 350°F [175°C]. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. In a large bowl, mix the flour, sugar, and chopped pistachios together. Add the cubed butter and incorporate it to the dry ingredients using a pastry cutter, a fork, or your hands, until the mixture forms pea-sized crumbs. Spread the mixture on the cookie sheet and bake for 10 minutes until the crumbs are golden (mixing the crumbs two to three times during baking allows them to brown more evenly). Let cool completely.

To make the macerated strawberries: Scrape the inside of the vanilla pod with the back of a knife blade to get the seeds. Place the seeds and the sugar in a small plate and use a fork to mix the vanilla seeds into the sugar. Fifteen to thirty minutes before service, quarter the strawberries and place them in a large bowl. Dust with the vanilla sugar, mix gently to coat the berries, and leave to macerate at room temperature until ready to assemble the verrines (or at least 15 minutes).

To assemble the verrines: Take the verrines out of the refrigerator 30 minutes before serving to bring them back to room temperature. Divide the macerated strawberries between each serving. Generously sprinkle with pistachio crumbs. Serve right away!

Notes:

- It's better to macerate the strawberries shortly before assembling the verrines. The more the strawberries macerate, the softer they become, and in this recipe, it's best if the strawberries remain firm and juicy. Similarly, it's better to add the crumbs at the very last minute so they remain crunchy (they will soften if they absorb the berry juices).
- Pistachios sold in their shells must be peeled before being used in this recipe because the skin that cover the nuts would change the texture of the cream. To peel the pistachios, simmer, rinse and dry as described in the recipe, then remove the skin by pinching each nut each between your fingers. Discard the skins.
- The pistachio cream can be made two days in advance. Once cooked, pour the cream into verrines, cover with plastic wrap, and store in the refrigerator until ready to assemble.
- The pistachio crumbs can be made two days in advance. Once cooled, store in an airtight container at room temperature until ready to assemble.