

— AMERICA'S —
TEST KITCHEN

Holiday Eggnog

SERVES Serves 12-16

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

We wanted a rich eggnog recipe with a relatively thick, creamy texture. Starting with a standard custard recipe (six eggs to 4 cups milk to 1/2 cup sugar), we tinkered around to find improvements. To enhance the custard's flavor and richness, we added two extra egg yolks; a little more sugar and a bit of salt also improved the flavor. Many eggnog recipes, though not all, called for the milk to be added to the beaten eggs very gradually. Upon trying this, we found that it did indeed make for a smoother texture.



INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 6 large eggs
- ☐ 2 egg yolks
- ☐ ½ cup granulated sugar
- ☐ 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

✱ Adding the milk to the eggs in small increments and blending thoroughly after each one helps ensure a smooth custard. To prevent curdling, do not heat custard beyond 160 degrees. If it does begin to curdle, remove from heat immediately and pour into a bowl set over a larger bowl of ice water to stop the cooking, and proceed with recipe.

- ☐ ¼ teaspoon table salt
- ☐ 4 cups whole milk
- ☐ ½ cup brandy, bourbon, or dark rum
- ☐ 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- ☐ ½ teaspoon fresh grated nutmeg, plus extra for garnish
- ☐ ½ cup heavy cream, whipped to soft peaks

You can omit the brandy to make a non-alcoholic eggnog, but you should also decrease the cream to 1/4 cup in order to keep the right consistency. For the same reason, increase the cream to 3/4 cup if you choose to add another 1/2-cup alcohol for a high-test nog.

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Off heat, whisk eggs, yolks, 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, and salt in heavy 3- or 4-quart saucepan. Stir in milk, one-half cup at a time, blending well after each addition. Heat slowly over lowest possible flame, stirring constantly, until custard registers 160 degrees on instant read thermometer, thickens, and coats the back of a spoon, 25 to 30 minutes. Pour custard through sieve into large bowl; stir in liquor, vanilla and grated nutmeg. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until well chilled, at least three hours and up to three days.

2 Just before serving, whip cream in medium bowl to very soft peaks and gently fold into custard mixture until incorporated. Serve in chilled punch bowl or cups, garnishing with optional grated nutmeg.