

Title:

Classy, Convenient Cooking for Two

Word Count:

530

Summary:

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Keywords:

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Article Body:

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French toast is yet another option -; a special but very economical option. In the Cajun areas of Louisiana, French toast is called pain perdu, lost bread. Long ago, thrifty cooks discovered they could rescue day-old (or older) bread which otherwise would have been wasted by soaking it in a mixture of eggs and milk before cooking it. When it's dressed up with a topping, though, who would ever guess that French toast had such a practical origin?

Although many folks consider French toast a breakfast food, you can serve this popular dish for any time of the day. For a classy meal, you can even split the toast slices, stuff them with cheese and serve them up with sugared strawberries.

Does French toast make a good meal? Sure. Following MyPyramid.gov, the bread is in the grain group and the eggs are a meat alternate. In Superb Stuffed French Toast, you get added calcium from the cheese stuffing and vitamin C from the strawberries on top. For the fiber it contains, this recipe calls for whole wheat bread, but you can use any type of bread you like. You can also use a different flavoring in place of the vanilla, such as almond, lemon or orange.

## Superb Stuffed French Toast

2 servings

1/2 cup sliced fresh strawberries (about 4 ounces)

2 teaspoons sugar, divided

1/3 cup part-skim ricotta cheese

3/4 teaspoon vanilla, divided

2 (1-inch) or 4 thin slices whole wheat bread

2 eggs

2 tablespoons skim or low-fat (1%) milk

Cooking spray

In medium bowl, stir together strawberries and 1 teaspoon of the sugar. Set aside. In small bowl, stir together ricotta, 1/2 teaspoon of the vanilla and remaining 1 teaspoon sugar until thoroughly blended. Make pocket in each 1-inch bread slice by cutting from top to within 1/2 inch of bottom. Fill each pocket with 2 tablespoons of the ricotta mixture. Or, spread 2 tablespoons of the ricotta mixture onto each of 2 thin slices of bread and place remaining bread on top to make 2 sandwiches.

In small bowl, beat together eggs, milk and remaining 1/4 teaspoon vanilla until well blended. Pour into 9 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan. Place filled bread slices in egg mixture. Soak bread, letting stand about 3 to 4 minutes on each side, until egg mixture is absorbed. Evenly coat baking sheet with spray. Place soaked bread on baking sheet.

Bake in preheated 375 degree F oven 10 minutes. Turn slices. Continue baking until puffed and golden brown, about 10 minutes. To serve, top each bread slice with 1 tablespoon of the remaining ricotta mixture and 1/4 cup of the reserved strawberries.

Nutrition information per serving of 1/2 recipe using 4 thin slices whole wheat

bread and skim milk: 328 calories, 12 gm total fat, 227 mg cholesterol, 428 mg sodium, 383 mg potassium, 38 gm carbohydrate, 18 gm protein and 10% or more of the RDI for vitamins A, B12 and C, niacin, riboflavin, thiamin, calcium, iron, phosphorus, zinc.