Panettone French Toast Casserole

Finally, a delicious use for the ubiquitous holiday cake that everyone loves to give but no one seems to eat. Panettone's raisins, citron and pine nuts make this rich, custardy breakfast just right for special occasions.

Level: Easy
Total: 7 hr 45 min (includes chilling and cooling times)
Active: 20 min
Yield: 10 to 12 servings

Ingredients:

- Unsalted butter, for greasing the dish
- 1 large panettone (about 2 pounds)
- 1 1/2 cups cherry jam
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 3 1/2 cups half-and-half
- 6 large eggs
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 cup blanched sliced almonds
- Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

Directions:



1. Grease a 2 1/2- to 3-quart casserole dish with butter; set aside.

2. Cut the panettone into 1-inch-thick slices (you should get about 5 or 6); if you have an odd number of slices, cut one in half. Spread the jam on half the slices. Spread the cream cheese on the other half. Press 1 slice of each together to form sandwiches. Cut the sandwiches into 1-inch squares, and arrange haphazardly in the prepared dish. (Don't worry; this can be a little messy. If the sandwich pieces come apart, just spread them out to fill in the spaces evenly. There's no need to re-form the pieces into sandwich squares.)

3. Whisk together the half-and-half, eggs, granulated sugar, vanilla, cinnamon and salt in a large bowl until combined. Pour evenly over the panettone in the dish. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 6 hours up to overnight.

4. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Remove the plastic wrap from the dish, and push down on the casserole. Sprinkle the almonds on top. Bake until puffed and golden brown and the custard is set (the center of the casserole will feel firm when touched), about 1 hour 10 minutes. If the top starts to brown too quickly, loosely cover with foil. Let cool for 20 minutes before serving warm or at room temperature with a dusting of confectioner's sugar.