VANILLA-LAVENDER POTS DE CRÈME

The vanilla bean. This little gem is one of the greatest treasures of the culinary world, and we aren't talking about the fake stuff in a bottle. We are talking the real deal! Sure, custard is cool and all - but the seductive, sweet flavor and quality of true vanilla steeped in coconut cream with the addition of dried lavender gives this classic dessert the face lift vanilla custard so badly needs. What you'll end up with is a perfectly sweet, creamy floral finish that will have you dancing with delight!

Prep time: 10 minutes, plus 4 hours in the fridge
Cook time: 45 minutes
Serves 6

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Preheat oven to 325°F

Heat the heavy cream and coconut milk in a small saucepan over medium heat. Meanwhile, split the vanilla beans lengthwise and scrape out the seeds and pulp with a paring knife. Add the seeds, pulp, and beans to the milk along with the dried lavender. Bring to a boil, turn off the heat, and cover. Let steep for 15 minutes. Keep warm.

Meanwhile, using an electric mixer fitted with a whisk attachment (or a bowl and whisk if doing it manually), beat the egg yolks and sugar at high speed for about 3 minutes, until the mixture is thick and pale yellow. When the whisk is lifted from the mixture, the mixture should fall back on itself in a ribbon-like fashion.

Fill a tea kettle or small saucepan with water and bring to a boil.

Heat the coconut-cream mixture back to a boil, turn off the heat, and strain the larger vanilla bean bits from the mixture. With the mixer at slow speed, add the infused coconut-cream slowly, ¼ cup at a time, to temper the eggs. Once half of the cream is added, incorporate the rest more quickly. Pour the mixture into 6 ramekins and place them in a roasting pan or baking dish.