

**Valentine's Day
Chocolate Custard
Leah Eskin**

Here's what you'll need:

Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream (might be labeled "whipping cream")
5 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
4 ounces bittersweet chocolate (60 – 70 percent)
 I like Guittard, but there are many good brands
Salt (I like Diamond Crystal kosher salt)
3 large eggs

Equipment:

1 metal bowl and whisk or an electric mixer with whisk attachment
1 whisk or fork
Double boiler – or a saucepan filled with a couple inches of water and a bowl that fits on top
Pyrex measuring cup or other cup with a spout
Measuring spoons
2 small bowls
4 four-ounce ramekins, cups or bowls
A few spoons
Oven mitts
A fine-mesh sieve
Silicone spatula
Instant read thermometer, optional



Recipes

Whipped cream

1 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Pour cream into bowl.
Whisk in sugar and vanilla.
Chill bowl. Freeze whisk.
When cold, whip to soft peaks.
Cover and chill.

Chocolate cups

The French call these *pots de crème au chocolat*, but why complicate things?

Serves 4

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate (60 – 70 percent)

1 cup heavy cream

3 tablespoons granulated sugar

1/8 teaspoon salt

3 egg yolks

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Melt: Break up chocolate into the top of a double boiler set over simmering water. Pour in cream. Cook, whisking, until chocolate has melted and cream is hot. Stir in sugar and salt.
2. Temper: Whisk a few tablespoons of the hot chocolate into the yolks, then whisk the yolks back into the chocolate. Cook, whisking, until very hot (165 degrees) and thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 7 – 9 minutes. Whisk in vanilla.
3. Chill: Strain chocolate into a Pyrex measuring cup. Pour into 4 (4-ounce) cups, leaving plenty of room for whipped cream. Chill until cold and set, about 2 hours. Cover with plastic wrap.
4. Gild: Uncover. Top each chocolate cup with whipped cream.