

"Mamman's bread pudding made a big impression on me as a small child when it would come to the table dripping with sauce and filled with plump raisins and pecans," Poppy remembers.

Tip: "French bread" in Louisiana is a fat loaf—not the long, skinny bread you find in the rest of the country.

Bread Pudding With Hard Sauce

Pudding

1 loaf (1 lb.) stale Louisiana-style French bread,
broken into chunks

8 large eggs

1 cup sugar

1 Tbsp. vanilla extract

1 cup pecans, coarsely broken

1 cup raisins

About 2 cups milk

Cinnamon (optional)

Nutmeg (optional)



Hard Sauce

½ cup (1 stick) butter, at room temperature

1 cup confectioners' sugar

2 Tbsp. bourbon

1. Make the pudding: Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, stir together the bread, eggs, sugar, vanilla, pecans and raisins. Add enough milk so that the mixture "breaks milk" when squeezed (the bread can absorb no more milk). Add a shake of cinnamon and nutmeg if desired.
2. Scrape into a greased shallow 10-cup baking pan and bake for 35 minutes or until cooked through.
3. Meanwhile, make the sauce: In a small bowl, with an electric mixer, cream the butter and confectioners' sugar. Add the bourbon and beat until the texture of sour cream.

Makes 12 servings

Total time: 45 minutes

Per serving: 456 calories, 20 g fat, 60 g carbohydrates (2.4 g fiber), 10 g protein, 304 mg sodium