

Flan Recipe

This custard-style dessert with a caramelized sugar topping is a traditional treat in Mexico. Your child will delight in baking this delicate dish, and learn some nifty tricks of the culinary trade, like how to caramelize sugar, use a water bath, and invert the flan. This basic recipe makes a party-sized portion rather than individual servings, and can be gussied up with fun flavors such as chocolate, coconut, lemon, or almond.

What You Need:

- 1 cup sugar
- 5 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 1 15 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

What You Do:

1. In a saucepan, melt the sugar over medium to medium-high heat. It's not necessary to stir the sugar, just tilt the pan from side to side occasionally to heat it evenly. As the sugar caramelizes, it will turn a rich brown color. It's best if an adult handles this step, as melted sugar can be dangerous.
2. Once the sugar has melted and turned a golden brown color, immediately pour the caramelized sugar into the baking dish and make sure it is spread evenly across the bottom. The sugar will harden as it cools, so work quickly but carefully. To give yourself a little extra time to work with the melted sugar, you can heat the baking dish in the oven for 10 minutes prior to filling it.
3. While the sugar hardens, have your child work on the custard. In a blender, have her combine the eggs, milk, condensed milk, and vanilla.
4. Invite her to pour the egg mixture on top of the caramelized sugar in the baking dish.
5. Next, have her turn on the oven and set it to 350 degrees. You don't have to preheat the oven ahead of time.
6. Now it's time to prepare the *bain-marie*, or water bath, to ensure even and gentle cooking. All you need is a roasting pan and some hot water. Have your child add enough hot water to the roasting pan to cover the baking dish halfway.
7. Help her carefully place the baking dish inside of the water bath.
8. Bake the flan for 80 minutes or until the egg mixture is set. After about 40-45 minutes, when the custard is lightly browned, you can tent the dish with aluminum foil to ensure even cooking.
9. Remove the flan from the oven. Let cool and serve slightly warm or chill it in the refrigerator for several hours or overnight.
10. In order to loosen the flan from the baking dish, simply slide a knife around the rim of the pan.
11. Now, for the final trick: have your child take a serving platter and place it face-down over the top of baking dish.
12. Make sure she has a good hold on both sides of the platter and baking dish.
13. Have her flip over the baking dish and...ta-da! The flan will slide right out!
14. Have her slice the flan into wedges and drizzle each piece with a little bit of the caramel sauce.



What a sweet way to end a fiesta!