

Creamy Maple Bread Pudding

- 4 to 4 1/2 cups cubed bread (any kind of bread will do, but brioche, panettone, croissants, white, whole grain, / or nutty is especially good.)
 - 4 large eggs
 - 1 1/4 cup milk
 - 1 cup heavy cream
 - 1/2 cup pure maple syrup (the darker the better, or a mix of cinnamon or vanilla infused maple syrup)
 - 1/4 cup maple sugar (brown sugar can be substituted)
 - 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 - 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 cup diced pecans or walnuts (optional)
 - 2 Tablespoons Cinnamon Maple Sprinkle (optional)
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease a 1 1/2 quart casserole or baking dish
 2. Place bread cubes into prepared pan. Whisk eggs, milk, cream, syrup, vanilla, nutmeg, and salt together in a separate bowl. Pour over bread cubes and let sit for 15 minutes to absorb the liquid. Press the cubes down into the liquid if the edges are dry.
 3. Bake pudding for 35 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with nuts and/or sugar. Return to oven and bake another 15-20 minutes, until the pudding has puffed up and is light brown around the edges. Remove from oven and let sit for few minutes. The pudding will settle as it sits, that's OK. Serve immediately, or reheats very well (just on the off chance there should be any leftovers!)
 4. Store covered in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

*Top with maple whipped cream: 2 Tablespoons pure maple syrup, or Cinnamon or Vanilla infused maple syrup, 1 cup heavy cream. Whip until soft peaks form. If you prefer it a bit sweeter add up to 1 Tablespoon maple sugar