

ZUCCOTTO

Grazie ad Antonella per questa ricetta, che viene dal Mad Cafè a Marina di Ravenna.

This serves 8-10 and last up to a week in the freezer.

BY: THE SHORTLISTS

- 1 1/4 cup (250 grams) mascarpone (or more)
- 2 heaping tablespoons fresh ricotta (optional)
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1/2 – 2/3 cup sugar (depending on taste)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups (150 grams) amaretti cookies, crushed
- 1/2 cup candied citrus peel, chopped finely
- 4 oz. (120 grams) good-quality dark chocolate, in shards
- sponge cake (pan di spagna) (store bought is ok)
- 1/3 cup rum or amaretto liquor mixed with water to make 1/2 cup

In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks and sugar until creamy. Add the mascarpone, ricotta (if using), vanilla, amaretti, candied peel and chocolate. You can add more of either cheese if you want more volume.

Clean the beaters, then use them to beat the egg whites in a separate bowl until they are *very* stiff, about 5 minutes. Gently fold the egg whites into the cheese mixture.

Now, take a large bowl and line it with plastic wrap. Don't worry, it doesn't need to be neat. Now take your sponge cake* and slice it into triangles so you can easily line the bowl with cake. Patch up any missing holes so that the bottom and sides of the bowl are completely lined with cake. Now take the rum-water mixture and sprinkle it all over the cake, trying to saturate it evenly. If you think it could use a bit more, go ahead and douse it in more rum (which never, ever hurts).

Pre-alcohol: see how not pretty it can be and still turn out delicious?

Once your bowl is lined with cake and your cake is doused in rum, go ahead and pour the cheese mixture into the bowl. Cover the top with remaining sponge cake to seal, then cover with plastic wrap. Push down on the plastic a bit then pop it in the freezer for at least 5 hours.

If the zuccotto is frozen solid, remove 1 hour before serving and place it in the refrigerator. (You want to serve this dessert very cold but not completely frozen. It doesn't melt easily, so don't worry about leaving it out.) To serve, invert the bowl onto a serving plate, remove all the plastic, and cut into slices.

* I sliced my cake in half horizontally because I thought it was too thick, but it's all a matter of preference. I used store-bought sponge cake (pan di spagna), but you could make your own.

