

Kulfi

Kulfi is an Indian ice cream flavoured with cardamon. It was created by the Moghuls and gets its name from the word for a cone-shaped metal container in which it is traditionally made.

Serves 6

There is a recipe for kulfi in the Ain-I-Akbari, a chronicle of court life written in 1590, so it has a long and distinguished history. The Moghul emperors transported ice from the mountains and mixed it with salt to freeze the kulfi.

Traditionally, kulfi is made by boiling down a large volume of ordinary milk but this recipe does away with all that. I have devised a much simpler and more convenient version which uses tins of evaporated milk instead.

ingredients

200ml full cream milk

4 cardamon pods

100g sugar

2 × 410g tins unsweetened evaporated milk

1 × 2.5ml spoon vanilla extract (**N.B.** not vanilla “essence” or “flavouring”)

chopped, unsalted pistachio nuts as a garnish (optional)

special equipment

plastic freezer box with lid – 2 litre capacity / about 20cm × 15cm × 8cm deep

method

1. Bring the milk, sugar and cardamon pods slowly to a simmer in a small saucepan.
2. Simmer **gently**, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Stir from time to time. Don't worry about the brown skin that will form. Just gently stir it in trying not to break it up too much. It will be caught in the sieve later on.
3. Remove the pan from the heat and let it cool. If you want to speed up the cooling process then sit the bottom of the pan in a bowl of cold water.
4. Pour the cooled milk through a sieve into a large bowl.
5. Add the evaporated milk and vanilla extract to the bowl and whisk everything together.
6. Tip the liquid out the of the bowl into a freezer box. Put the freezer box in the freezer and leave for **2 hours**.
7. Remove the box from the freezer. Use a spatula to scrape away any frozen mixture from the sides and bottom of the box. Now break up any large lumps with the back of a fork and vigorously beat the mixture. Return the box to the freezer and leave for another **2 hours**.
8. Repeat the last instruction and leave in the freezer for a further **1 hour**.

9. Repeat again and leave in the freezer for a further **1 hour** by which time the ice cream should be stiff but still able to be stirred with a little effort.
10. Remove the ice cream from the freezer and, as before, loosen the frozen bits from the sides and bottom of the box. Beat the ice cream with a fork.
11. Now return the box to the freezer and freeze until solid.
12. On the day you are going to serve the ice cream you will need to prepare the garnish. Coarsely chop some unsalted pistachio nuts and set them aside until needed.
13. When you are ready to use the ice cream remove it from the freezer **1 hour** before you are going to serve it. Put the freezer box **in the fridge** to come up to serving temperature. Don't just take the container out of the freezer and leave it at room temperature or else the ice cream will be melted at the edges and still rock hard in the centre.
14. Scoop out the kulfi from the freezer box. Serve in small bowls or wine glasses and garnish with the chopped pistachio nuts.



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