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Making Flan

Joycelyn Vasquez

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FLAN is a Mexican dessert that is consumed by different types of people. Flan is especially made when celebrating birthday parties or holidays in Mexico or in some Mexican homes, but let's take it back to see the history of how flan was created. It all started in Rome when they had a surplus of eggs. The Romans started making different recipes using different skills that they got from the Greeks. That is how flan was created and since Romans conquered a lot of Europe that recipe was spreading through Europe fast. When the Spanish got their hands on the flan recipe they were the first to add caramel sauce to the flan. Since the Spanish conquered Mexico, they brought the recipe with them and that's how Mexico ended up with the recipe and made it what it is known today.

I wanted to write about flan because I want to learn more about its background but also, I want to show other people how to make flan and how it is easy it can be. It may not be easy on your first time but with practice you will know this recipe like the back of your hand. Another thing is that there are so many ways to make flan which is cool because you can pick which recipe works best for you, so I hope this recipe is easy for you to make.

Objective

The objective is to make a delicious flan that can be shared with family and friends on any occasion which, for me, is mostly at birthday parties. I always enjoy making flan because I like baking. Knowing that the people you care about are going to enjoy the flan that you make is very rewarding. Laughing and making memories is always my favorite part because when I look back at it while I make flan for anything, I always have those memories.

Subject

For as long as I can remember my mom always made flan for parties that we had or just because she had a sweet tooth. Sometimes people would ask her to make flan for a party that we were invited to. I don't really remember when I started to make it, I think one day my mom was making the flan, so I just paid attention to how she was making it. From that day on I would always help her because I always wanted to learn how to make it but I was scared to do it on my own. I will never forget the day when my mom tried my flan when I tried making it for the first time.

One day she went to work but she needed to make a flan, so she yelled at me through the phone until I would say yes to making it and so I did. The whole time I was making it, she was on the phone telling me what to do or sometimes yelling at me because I would get confused on the directions she would tell me. Thank God I got through it even with all her yelling, it was fun making it but just not the parts that I messed up in. Ever since that day I have been making flan for my family, friends or people that ask my mom to make flan for them. (The people that ask my mom don't know that I am the one that actually makes the flan and not my mom).

Tools

The tools that are used to make the flan are a can of condensed milk, a can of nestle la lechera, pure cane sugar, 6 eggs, vanilla extract, stove/oven, pan, and a wood spatula (spoon).

Rules

There are some rules that need to be followed so the flan doesn't overcook or taste bad. Before you start to bake make sure your working station is clean and your hands are washed as well. Remember to keep all of your ingredients together in one place. I learned this the hard way because when I was learning to make flan all my ingredients were all over the kitchen, so I was running around the kitchen looking for my condensed milk and sweet condensed milk. In order, for the sugar to not burn you must keep the flame on low so that the sugar can melt and caramelize.

The first time I tried making it caramelized, I burned my sugar. I spent another hour trying to make it again because I had put it in high flame, so I repeated it by putting it under a low flame. When cooking the flan there is two ways to cook it. For example, you can use double boiler or cook it in the oven. Cook it in the oven because it's easier for you not to overcook it. Another thing that is important is to stay focused on making the flan until you're done. It's easy to get distracted on another thing and before you know it you burn your sugar or burn your flan that is in the oven.

Division of Labor

Before you start to make your flan, go to your local grocery store, preferably a store that sells Mexican products. There are more chances that you'll find ingredients there than any other store.

In the store you will buy eggs, vanilla, condensed milk, sweet condensed milk, pure cane sugar if you don't already have some at your house (see figure 1 for the ingredients). Before you start baking, you will want to open all your cans so it's easier when you put them in a blender. In a bowl or cup, you will want to put 6-7 tablespoons of your sugar, and in a different bowl put 6 eggs, that you have cracked with both the whites and yolks. You don't have to separate them as you will need both yolk and whites to make flan.



Figure 1: Ingredients

Baking the Flan

The first step in making flan is putting the pan/ pot on the stove and put 6-7 tablespoon of sugar in the pan. Then turn the flame to low so it can start to caramelize. While the sugar is melting, preheat your oven to 375 F. Now go back to your sugar to see if it has started to melt, if not leave it until it starts to melt, if it has, mix it with the white sugar so it can melt as well and evenly. After getting your blender, add the can of condensed milk, can of Lechera (sweet condensed milk), 1 tablespoon of vanilla, the 6 eggs and you blend it on middle speed for about 10 minutes or until you see all the ingredients have blended well. While that is blending, check if the sugar has caramelized and if so, start mixing it with the rest of the sugar, in the pan evenly. If it is not, then go back to the blender to turn it off.

Now go back to the sugar and wait until it has melted and spread it evenly around the pan. (see figure 2 to see how the sugar should be) After it's



Figure 2: Carmalized Sugar

spread evenly turn the stove off and let the sugar cool off and get rock solid. Don't forget to turn the stove off because you will burn yourself like I did when I was learning. Next, when you see that it has cooled down, you can add in the blended ingredients in the pot.

Now cover it with aluminum foil and now you can put it in the oven. Also, when you have already put the flan in the oven turn down the oven to 350 F and cook it for an hour. After the hour has passed, check on the flan but don't take it out, stick a fork or a toothpick to see if it comes out clean or not. If the fork/ toothpick does come out clean you can turn the oven off and let the flan cool down but don't take out until it has cooled down. If it has not cooked all the way through leave it for another 30 minutes or until you see the fork come out clean. (see figure 3 for the end product) Do not forget it's in the oven and do not forget to turn off the oven so it does not burn. I did that once I did not hear the end of it from my mother and she still can't let that go.



Figure 3: Final Product

Community

My family, friends, and close family friends are part of the community that loves to eat flan with their cake during parties. Every time I make flan I see on my family faces how much they enjoy my flan and it is a nice feeling knowing that you cause their happy faces. Also, any fans of flan are part of the flan community because they enjoy the different varieties and eating the delicious flan a lot of places offer for consumers to buy. In my opinion nothing beats homemade flan, including store bought or a pastry place that you can buy from. I hope this recipe helps you learn how to make Mexican flan.

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