

My Dad's Homemade Irish Creme – Comfort du Jour

The Christmas season doesn't feel real in our house until the refrigerator holds a bottle of this luxurious libation. My father has made this homemade version of Irish creme (his spelling) for years, and it is rich and decadent, far creamier than the shelf-stable stuff you can buy at the liquor store.

My father's original recipe suggests using heavy cream and whole milk, but I have fiddled with the recipe and found that light cream and half & half makes it every bit as creamy, without the clumping that sometimes occurs with chilled heavy cream. Increase the Irish whiskey if you like (my dad does), but I think the ratios are perfect just as they are.

Enjoy this straight, on ice or as a decadent flavor addition to your Christmas morning coffee or hot cocoa.

INGREDIENTS

4 oz. (1/2 cup) light cream* (see notes)
2 tsp. espresso powder (or instant coffee)*
1 Tbsp. chocolate syrup
1 14 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
8 oz. (1 cup) half & half*
6 oz. (3/4 cup) Irish whiskey

*NOTES

Light cream is 20% milkfat, compared to nearly 40% milkfat in heavy cream. For readers abroad, the term "half & half" may not make sense, given that the European market does not have a product labeled this way. If you combine equal parts light cream with whole milk, you'll strike a similar balance to the fat in half & half.

If my suggested ingredients are not available where you are, go with my dad's original suggestion for 4 oz. heavy cream and 8 oz. whole milk, and perhaps strain the mixture to help avoid the clumps that occur with cold heavy cream.

Espresso powder is available in the baking aisle of many well-stocked supermarkets or online from King Arthur Baking Company. You may substitute a high-quality instant coffee, such as Starbucks Via brand. I've used Starbucks "dark roast" instant coffee with very good results.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place a small, heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium-low heat. Warm the light cream, espresso powder and chocolate syrup until the mixture steams and the espresso powder is completely dissolved. Remove from heat and cool completely.
2. Use a whisk to blend the coffee-infused cream, condensed milk and half & half.
3. Stir in Irish whiskey. Give it a taste and adjust any ingredient as desired.
4. Divide Irish cream into sealable bottles and refrigerate.

Enjoy within three weeks. At our house, it is usually gone within three hours. 😊