

## Almond Pear Brioche Toast

Servings: 8

Difficulty: Intermediate

Syrup:

1/2 cup water

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 tsp almond extract

Cream:

3/4 cup whole almonds (heaping)

1/2 cup confectioner's sugar

3/4 cup unsalted butter (slightly cooler than room temperature, not soft)

3/4 cup sugar

3 large eggs (room temperature)

1 1/4 tsp almond extract

Toast:

1 loaf Brioche (slice into 3/4" slices)

sliced almonds (2 tbsp per slice of bread)

2 ripe pears (thinly sliced, 1/4 pear per slice of bread)

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### Create the Syrup

In a small heavy-duty saucepan, bring the water and sugar to a boil over medium-high heat to dissolve the sugar, stir occasionally, until clear. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 45 minutes. Once cool, add almond extract. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use. When refrigerated, it will last for several weeks.

### Make the Cream

Place almonds and confectioner's sugar in a food processor or mini-chopper with a steel blade. Grind until the almonds make a meal, but not a paste. Reserve. Cream the butter and sugar in a stand mixer with paddle attachment for about 3 minutes until light and fully aerated. Scrape sides of bowl as necessary. Add the almond meal to the creamed butter mixture until just combined (30 seconds on low). Increase speed to medium-high. Add the eggs one at a time. Ensure each egg is fully incorporated before adding the next. Finally, add almond extract and beat until light and fluffy (4 minutes). Be careful not to overmix to avoid cream breaking down (if it begins to do so, refrigerate to chill and then re-beat). Transfer cream to an airtight container and chill for at least 2 hours. It will last three days in the refrigerator).

### **Assemble the Toast**

Preheat oven to 400°. Line two 12" x 17" pans with parchment. Trim a thin slice of crust from each end of the brioche loaf and cut the remaining bread into 3/4" slices (usually 8 or 9 per loaf). Place slices on pans. With a pastry brush, moisten the top side of each slice liberally with almond syrup, making sure to get some syrup around the outer edges of the bread slice. Moisten all slices, and repeat two additional times with the syrup. Place about 2 tsp. of cream (cold from the refrigerator) in the middle of each slice and spread out into a thin layer using an offset spatula (this prevents the cream from running off onto the pan during baking). Fan 1/4 of the pear slices on the almond cream on each slice. Add 2 additional tsp. over pear slices. Lightly press the sliced almonds into the top layer of cream.

Bake the slices for 6 minutes, then reduce the temperature to 350°F and rotate pans from top to bottom shelf of oven. Bake an additional 6 – 7 minutes, just until topping is light brown. Immediately remove from pan and place slices on wire racks to cool and crisp up a bit before serving. We like to serve these warm (after 5-10 minutes of cooling).