



Nutty French Toast Casserole

Not sure what it is about having breakfast for dinner but it feels like a party, and this nut topped french toast casserole is always a hit. You have to love any recipe where everything gets tossed together and into a big baking dish for a week night win!

Ingredients:

- 1 (16 – 17 ounce) loaf brioche bread cut into cubes (I use Trader Joe's sliced brioche loaf)
- 6 eggs
- 1 ½ cups half & half
- ¼ cup granulated sugar

- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- Pinch salt (about a scant ¼ teaspoon)
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Cinnamon Crunch Topping Ingredients:

- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup chopped almonds
- Pinch salt
- 2 tablespoons unsalted, melted butter
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour

Preparation:

-Lightly mist a medium-size baking dish with cooking spray; set aside.

-To prepare the casserole, add the cubed brioche into a large bowl; in another bowl, whisk together the eggs, half and half, sugar, vanilla, pinch of salt, and cinnamon, and pour this custard over the cubed brioche; toss very gently and carefully as to not break up the cubes, just until combined, and turn out into your prepared baking dish.

-Cover with foil and place into the fridge to rest for about 3 hours, or overnight if making ahead for the next day's breakfast. (You can skip this “resting” step, but the casserole may not be quite as light and fluffy inside.)

-While your casserole rests, prepare the cinnamon crunch topping by combining the brown sugar, the cinnamon, the almonds, the pinch of salt and the melted butter in a small dish, and mix with a fork; add in the flour, and blend that in with the fork until crumbly; set aside in the fridge until you're ready to bake the French toast casserole.

-When you're ready to bake, preheat the oven to 375°.

-Sprinkle the cinnamon crunch topping over top of the casserole and bake, uncovered, for 35 minutes turning half-way through the cook time; after 35 minutes, turn off the oven, and allow the casserole to stay inside for another 5-7 minutes; then, remove from oven, dust with powdered sugar, if desired, and serve with maple syrup.