

Lemon Curd

BY SUSAN SPUNGEN

Lemon curd goes back and forth between a liquid and solid state depending on its temperature. Remember that it has quite a bit of butter in it and behaves accordingly. If using it to smoothly glaze the top of a cake or pour into a pre-baked tart shell, it should be used warm. It will spread out all on its own to a smooth-as-glass surface. On the other hand, chill it and it will be firm enough to slice.

Makes about 2 cups

- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 6 egg yolks
- 1 cup/200g sugar
- 4 teaspoons freshly grated lemon zest
- 1 stick (8 tablespoons) cold unsalted dairy or vegan/plant butter, cut into pieces

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1. Combine the lemon juice, egg yolks, and sugar in a non-reactive bowl (stainless steel is the best option). Whisk until smooth.
 2. Transfer the mixture to a heavy non-reactive saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until hot, 5 to 10 minutes. The mixture should begin to thicken as the temperature increases. Once thick (it should coat the back of the spoon), reduce the heat and cook for an additional 5 to 10 minutes, stirring continuously.
 3. Remove the saucepan from the heat and strain over a bowl. Stir in the lemon zest and butter until the butter has completely melted. Cool or chill until the curd reaches the desired consistency, before dolloping into the center of each meringue.
 4. Leftover curd can be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container up to 1 week. Warm over a double boiler or microwave briefly to return it to liquid form. It will set up again when chilled.