

Blackberry French Toast

1/2-pound loaf crusty French bread, sliced (not sourdough)

10 large eggs

1/4 cup sugar plus 1 teaspoon, for sprinkling

1 1/2 cups milk

1/2 pint heavy cream

2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted

1 (12-ounce) bag frozen blackberries, defrosted, or 3/4 pint fresh blackberries

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

Spread the bread slices on a baking sheet and turn off the oven. Place the sheet in the oven and leave it overnight until the bread is dried.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

In a large bowl, whisk the eggs and 1/4 cup sugar until all yolks are broken, and then add the milk and cream. Put the dried bread pieces on top of the egg mixture. Wait a few minutes, and then push the rest of the bread into the mixture and mix lightly. Place a small or medium casserole dish on a baking sheet that is lined with foil. Brush the dish with some of the melted butter.

Put half of the bread mixture in the dish to make a layer that covers the bottom. With a slotted spoon, arrange the berries evenly over the bread layer. Sprinkle the berries with sugar. Using your hands, pull out the remaining bread and create a second layer, arranging it evenly and patting down any crusts. With a spatula, stir the remaining egg mixture and pour over the top bread layer. Using a flat pastry brush, lightly brush the rest of the melted butter over the top. Bake the French toast until it puffs about 1-inch on the sides, about 1 1/2 hours. Let it cool for about 10 minutes, then cut into servings and serve immediately with sausage patties and fresh fruit.

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