

VELVET CHOCOLATE PUDDING



1/2 vanilla bean, halved lengthwise
1 1/2 cups whole milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup All Natural SomerSweet Baking Blend®
(or 2 tablespoons original SomerSweet®)
4 1/2 ounces SomerSweet® baking chocolate (or any dark chocolate)
5 large egg yolks

Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 275 degrees.

Scrape seeds from vanilla bean into a saucepan with tip of a paring knife, then add pod, milk, cream, and All Natural SomerSweet® and bring just to a boil, stirring until All Natural SomerSweet® is dissolved.

Add chocolate and cook over moderately high heat, stirring gently with a whisk, until chocolate is melted and mixture just boils. Remove from heat.

Pour mixture into a metal bowl. Set bowl into a larger bowl of ice and cold water and cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes.

Whisk in yolks, then pour entire mixture through a fine-mesh sieve. Discard vanilla pod and any other solids.

Divide mixture among six 4-ounce ramekins. Place ramekins into a roasting pan. At the oven door, pour water into the roasting pan so that it comes up half way up the sides of the ramekins. Bake in a water bath until puddings are just set around edge but centers wobble when ramekins are gently shaken, about 1 hour.

Cool puddings in water bath 1 hour, then remove from water and chill, uncovered, until cold, at least 1 hour.

Note: Puddings can be chilled, if covered with a sheet of plastic wrap after 4 hours, for up to 2 days. Blot very gently with paper towels before serving.