

Favorite Recipes

This wonderful fall breakfast casserole is perfect for the day after Thanksgiving or Christmas, when you want to stop cooking and enjoy shopping or football games. It's a great take-along for tailgating early, too. It one of our seasonal favorites at the Willows Inn, too!

WILLOWS THANKSGIVING BREAKFAST CASSEROLE

Ingredients

1 Buttered 9×12" glass casserole dish

12 mini or 8 large baked or store bought croissants

1 1/2 cups unsweetened applesauce, or diced sautéed apples

8 oz cream cheese softened

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon orange zest

1 cup frozen or fresh cranberries

1 cup sugar

10 eggs

1 cup whole milk

¼ cup melted butter

½ cup sliced honey-coated almonds

Generously butter casserole dish. Break up croissants into 1-2" pieces and lightly place pieces into the greased casserole dish. Pour applesauce, or apples over croissants . Take teaspoonfuls of cream cheese and dot over apples; then

sprinkle with cinnamon, orange zest, cranberries and sugar. Toss gently to coat. In a separate, large bowl whisk together the eggs, milk and butter. Pour entire egg mixture over casserole, making sure all ingredients are evenly coated (carefully tilt dish to insure egg mixture coats all the croissants). Press down gently, if any bread is not covered. Sprinkle the top of casserole evenly with the sliced almonds. Cover lightly with plastic wrap and let sit in refrigerator (or cool place) overnight, for at least 8 hours.

About 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours prior to breakfast, take casserole from the refrigerator and preheat your oven to 350°F. When oven is ready, uncover and place casserole into preheated oven. Bake for 30-45 minutes until it is golden brown on the edges and does not move when gently shaken. Let sit for 10 minutes, then cut and serve in squares alongside bacon or sausage and offer some Grand Mariner whipped cream as an accompaniment. This is quite simply, **delicious**—and it can all be done in advance or even frozen (just thaw completely before baking). Enjoy your holidays!©The Willows Cooking School