

## Fruity French Toast Casserole with Fruity Syrup

*Depending on which fruit you use, you can vary this dish.*

*This dish is a plan-ahead one as this dish needs to set about 2 hours before baking.*

*It also can be prepped a day ahead and left overnight in the fridge, then baked just before serving.*

*You can also prep this dish the night before and cook in a slow cooker overnight so it's ready when you awake—  
Just follow all the steps but replace the casserole dish with the slow cooker one and then cook on LOW 5-6 hours.*

Measure out **4 cups of frozen or fresh blueberries, strawberries, peaches, or cherries**

You will 2 cups of the fruit in the casserole, and the other 2 cups to make the syrup. Set aside.

Cut up: **1 loaf bread** (Italian/French/Challah/or my favorite—hot dog buns!)  
in 1x1 cubes which makes **about 8 cups** and set aside.

Make a custard by mixing together:

**10 eggs**

**1 cup whole milk**

**2/3 cup brown sugar**

**1 teaspoon vanilla**

**1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**

**¼ teaspoon fine salt**

Cut up in small cubes:

**8 oz block of cream cheese**

In a 9x13 greased (**butter preferred**) casserole dish:

-evenly put about 1/3 of the bread in

-then evenly pour about 1/3 of the custard

-then evenly put about 1/3 of the cubes of cream cheese

-then evenly put about 1/3 of the 2 cups of frozen fruit

-repeat until all bread cubes, custard, cream cheese, and (2 cups of the) fruit are in the casserole dish

-push the mixture down a bit so that all the bread is able to absorb the custard

-cover and set aside for 2 hours

*AT THIS POINT, IF MAKING A DAY AHEAD, YOU CAN REFRIGERATE THE DISH OVERNIGHT, BUT ALLOW TO COME UP TO ROOM TEMP BEFORE BAKING (ABOUT 30 MINUTES OR AN HOUR OR SO)*

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Bake covered for 30 minutes, then uncovered for an additional 30 minutes or until the center is set and golden brown and rises. It should jiggle very slightly when done. Serve with warmed fruit syrup (or just maple syrup).

**FRUIT SYRUP:** (make while the casserole is baking):

Mix together in a pan then simmer:

2 Tablespoons cornstarch

½ cup sugar

1 cup water

Add and cook an additional 10 minutes or so:

**2 cups of the fruit** that you had set aside earlier