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PREP: 60 min
COOK: 45 min
SERVES: 8

Vanilla Poached Pear Mascarpone Tart

This adorable tart is made with miniature pears, which look so impressive! If you can't find them, then sliced larger pears would work as well.

Ingredients

Pears & Pastry

18 Forelle Pears (or other miniature pear variety)

2/3 cup (150g) caster sugar

1 cinnamon quill

1 tbsp Queen Vanilla Bean Paste

1 mint tea bag

2 cups (500ml) water

1 packet Vanilla Bean shortcrust pastry (or rough puff pastry)

Mascarpone Cream

4 large eggs, separated

1/3 cup (75g) caster sugar

Method - Poached Pears

STEP 1

In a medium heavy based saucepan, combine caster sugar, cinnamon quill, vanilla bean paste, mint tea bag and water and heat on low heat until the sugar has melted. Take off heat and set aside – this is the poaching liquid.

STEP 2

To prepare the pears for poaching, peel them leaving the stem intact. To core them without cutting them in half, turn the pears upside down and using a sharp thin knife gently cut around the calyx of the pear at the base then using a small spoon remove the flesh that was cut and scoop out the seeds from the core. As you core each pear, add to the poaching liquid to prevent pears from discolouring.

STEP 3

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Ingredients

250g mascarpone cheese

Method - Poached Pears

Remove the tea bag and discard, then cover pears and liquid with a round of baking paper. Place saucepan on a low heat and simmer without boiling until the pears have softened (about 15-20 minutes). Take off heat and remove pears to cool separately to the liquid. When cool, store together in one container until ready to use.

Method - Pastry

STEP 1

Grease a 22cm removable base tart tin. Carefully line the tart tin with the pastry and then place in the fridge to rest for 30 minutes.

STEP 2

Preheat oven to 160°C (fan forced).

STEP 3

Line the pastry with baking paper then fill to top with baking weights or rice. Place in the oven and bake for 15 minutes until pastry is golden underneath paper. Remove paper and weights and bake for a further 5 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.

Method - Mascarpone Cream

STEP 1

While the tart case is in the oven prepare the mascarpone cream. Beat egg yolks and caster sugar together until pale yellow and thickened. In a separate bowl beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Add the mascarpone to the egg whites and stir through until just blended. Add egg yolk mixture and fold through with a wooden spoon until just combined. Set aside.

STEP 2

When ready to assemble tart, spoon the mascarpone cream into the tart case and top with the poached pears.

STEP 3

To serve with syrup, remove cinnamon stick from the poaching liquid and boil liquid in a saucepan over medium-high heat until liquid turns to a syrup (about 15 minutes). Drizzle over pears and mascarpone cream.

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