

Spiced Poached Pears with Hot Chocolate Sauce and Vanilla Ice Cream

(Serves 4)

Ingredients For the Poached Pears

4 x Conference Pears (Peeled, cored and rubbed)
250g Caster Sugar
600ml Sweet Dessert Wine
200ml Orange Juice
1 Lemon (Juiced)
1 Vanilla Pod
2 Star Anise
1 Tub Vanilla Ice Cream

Ingredients For the Chocolate Sauce

50g Dark Chocolate (cut into small pieces)
50g Caster Sugar
25g Cocoa Powder
375 ml Water

Method

Place the caster sugar, sweet wine, orange juice, lemon juice, vanilla pod and star anise into a large thick bottomed saucepan and leave to dissolve for 3-4 mins.

Add the peeled pears to the saucepan and cover with a greaseproof paper disc (kartouche) and place on the heat.

Bring to the boil and simmer for no more than 5 mins, then remove the pan from the heat.

Leave the pears to cool down in the saucepan until they are just warm.

To make the chocolate sauce, place the water, sugar and cocoa powder into a thick bottomed saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer gently for 5 mins whisking occasionally to ensure the cocoa powder is fully mixed in and remove from the heat. Add the chocolate pieces slowly; stirring continuously until all the pieces have melted into the water mix and a smooth chocolate sauce is achieved.

Remove the poached pears from the cooking liquor and place onto some kitchen paper or cloth to remove any excess liquid.

Slice the bottom of the pears off with a knife so they are able to sit upright. Roll the pear in a little caster so it has a light covering all over and caramelize lightly with a gas gun

To Serve

Sit an upright poached pear on the plate.

Place a ball/scoop of vanilla ice cream next to it and pour the hot chocolate sauce around.

Serve more hot chocolate sauce apart.

