

PEARS POACHED IN PORT WINE AND VANILLA

Stunning. That's what you'll say when you plate these beauties! Pears cooked simply in port wine make for a beautiful and delicious fruit dessert. We love using port for this recipe because of its raspberry, blackberry, caramel, cinnamon, and chocolate notes that absorb into the pears while cooking. We also add a hint of vanilla and almond to the poaching liquid to bring all of these amazing flavors together. Serving these sweet and juicy pears with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or lightly whipped cream is a must!

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Serves 6

Ingredients:

8 firm but ripe Bosc pears
4 cups ruby port
¼ cup lemon juice
a few drops of almond extract, optional
1 vanilla bean, or ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Serve with vanilla ice cream or lightly sweetened whipped cream.

To core the pears, use a melon baller or the oval end of a potato peeler and dig in from the bottom, removing the core and seeds. Peel the pears.

In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, roomy enough to hold the pears in one layer, combine the pears, port, lemon juice, almond extract, and enough water to just cover the pears by ½ inch.

Split the vanilla bean lengthwise and scrape out the seeds and pulp with a paring knife. Add the seeds, pulp, and bean to the pot.

Bring the liquid to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Place a heatproof plate on top of the pears to submerge and cook gently until they are tender when pierced with a knife, about 15-20 minutes. Remove the pears from the poaching liquid and set aside.

Boil the poaching liquid over high heat, uncovered, reducing the liquid until thick and syrupy, about 10-15 minutes. This port reduction should coat the back of a spoon.