

Pears with Chocolate Sauce



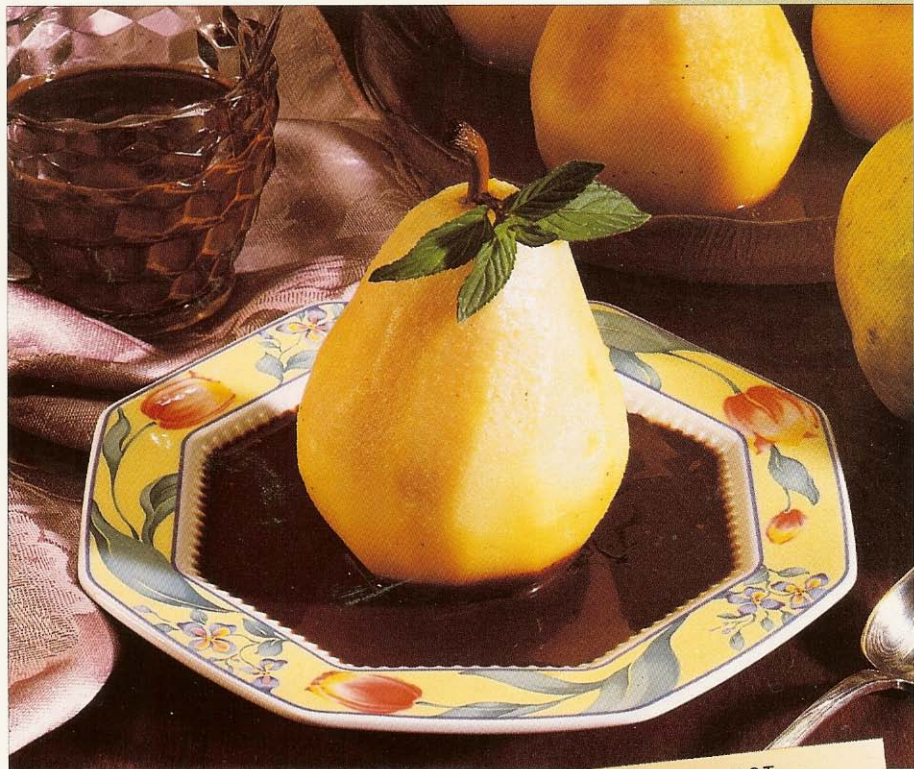
PREPARATION TIME
10 minutes



COOKING TIME
20 minutes



PERFECT PARTNER
almond biscotti



Do not discard the pear poaching liquid—it will make a great butter-rum syrup. Bring the liquid to a boil; add 2 tablespoons butter and 1 teaspoon rum extract. Boil until syrupy. Serve over pound cake.

SHOPPING LIST

- pears • ground nutmeg
- unsweetened chocolate
- clove

ON HAND

- brown sugar • butter • salt
- vanilla extract • sugar

INGREDIENTS

- 4 firm medium pears, peeled, stems intact
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 whole clove
- 1/2 cup brown sugar

SAUCE:

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

SERVES 4

COOKIN' Express

- Make an extra-quick chocolate sauce when in a hurry. Melt 8 ounces semisweet chocolate chips with 1 cup heavy cream in the top of a double boiler; cook over low heat. Stir continually until chocolate melts.

Make Ahead

You can prepare both the pears and the chocolate sauce up to 8 hours ahead; refrigerate separately.

♦ VARIATION

For a lighter touch and less calories, serve pears in a raspberry purée instead of the chocolate sauce.

1 Slice 1/4 inch from bottom of each pear to allow it to stand upright. Place pears in a saucepan with water, nutmeg, clove and brown sugar. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; cover.



2 Reduce heat to low. Simmer pears until just tender, about 15 minutes. Remove pears from pan with a slotted spoon.

3 Melt butter and chocolate in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring continually. Stir in sugar, salt and water. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in vanilla.



4 Pour sauce onto individual serving plates. Place a pear, standing upright, in center of each plate. Serve immediately.