

PEARS WITH MARSALA CUSTARD





PEARS IN POMEGRANATE AND WINTER STRAWBERRIES WITH MARSALA CUSTARD

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Serves: 4

Difficulty: ★★

1L pomegranate juice
2 punnets strawberries, hulled and halved
2 cups caster sugar
1 vanilla bean, split
4 bay leaves
thickly-sliced zest of 4 oranges

½ tsp white peppercorns
4 firm pears (Beurre Bosc, Packham or Williams)
1 cup Marsala
4 egg yolks
300g thickened cream, whipped to soft peaks

1 Pour the juice into a medium saucepan then add the strawberries, 1½ cups sugar, vanilla, bay leaves, orange zest and peppercorns. Boil rapidly until reduced by one-fifth. Peel and core the pears, place in the pomegranate mixture, reduce the heat to low, weight the pears down gently, then simmer very slowly for 20 minutes, until the pears are not quite tender.

2 Scoop the pears out, then boil the sauce rapidly for 15 minutes, until syrupy. Strain through a fine sieve.

3 Combine the remaining sugar with the Marsala and yolks in a heatproof bowl and whisk until very light. Set over a saucepan of barely simmering water, then whisk until thickened. Continue whisking until cool, then fold in the cream. Serve with the pears and syrup.