

Red Wine Pear Tarte Tatin

Adapted from *Food & Wine*

Serves 8:

Ingredients

2 cups dry red wine
2 cinnamon sticks
6 to 7 firm-ripe Bartlett pears
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup water
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon pear liqueur (optional)
1 14 ounce sheet all-butter puff pastry

creme fraiche, as an accompaniment

Preparation

In a small saucepan, add red wine and cinnamon sticks and bring to a boil over medium high heat.

Cook to reduce wine to 1/4 cup, about 15 minutes.

Let the syrup cool--you can make this a day in advance and reserve.

Peel and halve 6 to 7 pears.

Use a melon baller to gently remove the cores and a small paring knife to slice out the stem of each pear.

Place the sugar and water in a heavy skillet, preferably cast iron, over medium high heat.

Cook sugar until it turns golden, gently swirling the pan.

An amber caramel should form in about 5 minutes.

Keep your eye on this--it can burn in a second and then you'll have to start over.

Remove the pan from heat and stir in red wine syrup, unsalted butter and pear liqueur, if you have it.

Cook caramel over low heat, until it bubbles and softens, about a minute.

Add pear halves to caramel in skillet.

Cook gently, turning occasionally, until pears are tender and juices in pan are syrupy, about 20 minutes.

Turn all pears cut side up and fit in one layer in the pan.

Let cool completely.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Thaw puff pastry according to package directions.

Lightly flour work surface.

Lay down a sheet of pastry and roll it out with a floured rolling pin.

Using a pot lid as a template, cut out a 12 inch round.

Cut four steam vents in the center of dough with the tip of a knife.

Lay pastry over pears and tuck edges into the skillet.

This can be prepared in advance and let rest until ready to serve.

Place skillet in preheated oven and bake for 10 minutes--the pastry will be golden and puffed.

Remove from oven and let tarte tatin rest for about 15 minutes.

Very carefully, invert pan onto a platter and serve immediately.

Plate each wedge with a large dollop of creme fraiche.

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