

Mead-Poached Pears

Source: Michael D'Attilo

1 cup semi-sweet Mead
3/4 cup dark brown sugar
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
8 Ripe (or near-ripe) Barlett pears
Vanilla ice cream, for serving

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Peel the pears, slice them in half lengthwise and core them with a spoon, ensuring that all rough and stringy parts have been removed.

In a small saucepan, whisk the sugar into the mead over medium-high heat until the sugar dissolves. Add in the butter, and bring to a simmer. Simmer the mixture for about 5 minutes, then add the pears and allow the mixture to cook for about 10 minutes. Stir and rotate the pears occasionally so that they are all coated in the liquid.

Arrange the pears in a baking dish or casserole dish, and pour the syrup around them. Bake the pears for about 35 minutes, so that they are cooked and soft but not crisp. Check the pears regularly: if they are starting to dry out slightly, rotate them so that dry parts are submerged in the syrup.

Spoon the pears onto plates, cut side up. Fill their cores with cold vanilla ice cream. Serve hot.

Note: The pears will taste rather dry on their own; they need the contrasting sweetness of the ice cream. For a standalone dish, use more sugar, at least 1 1/3 cups.

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