COOKING PASSION SINCE 1877

Pepper Meringues with Poached Cherries

DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES

COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

SERVES: 6

Ingredients

Meringue
3 egg whites, room temperature
1/8 tsp cream of tartar
1 cup caster sugar
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Cherries
¾ cup water
½ cup caster sugar, extra
1 vanilla pod, split and seeds scraped
15 black peppercorns
400 g fresh cherries, pitted

Whipped mascarpone cream
125 g mascarpone cream
½ cup thickened cream
½ tsp vanilla extract
2 tsp icing sugar
A few extra fresh cherries to garnish

Chocolate and Pistachio Crumble
½ cup caster sugar
2 tbsp water
75 g 70% cocoa dark chocolate, finely chopped
2 tbsp finely chopped pistachio nuts

Method

Preheat oven on 100°C CircoTherm®. Line an enamel tray with baking paper.

Place egg whites in the bowl of an electric mixer; using the whisk attachment, whisk egg whites and cream of tartar on a low speed until frothy; increase the speed to high, whisking until soft peaks form. Gradually add caster sugar and pepper, beating well after each addition, to ensure sugar has dissolved before adding more; continue beating for 3 – 4 minutes. Evenly spoon into 6 individual rounds onto prepared tray and cook for 1 hour. Allow to cool in the oven.

Meanwhile, prepare the cherries. Put water, sugar, vanilla bean pod and seeds, peppercorns and cherries in a small solid stainless tray. Preheat oven on 100°C FullSteam. Steam the cherries for 5-10 minutes, or until tender. Time will depend on firmness of cherries. Transfer cherries to a bowl with half of the poaching liquid; cover with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator. Remember to remove peppercorns before serving.

Combine mascarpone, cream, vanilla and icing sugar in a bowl. Whisk until thick and soft peaks form. Cover and refrigerate.

To make chocolate and pistachio crumble, place sugar and water into a small saucepan; cook over a low heat (Induction level 4), stirring continuously, until sugar dissolves. Increase the heat (Induction level 5-7) and bring to the boil. Cook without stirring until a golden edge forms (sugar syrup in the centre will still be clear with no colour) and there is a smell of toffee. Remove immediately from the heat and with a whisk, quickly stir in the chocolate. Keep stirring until a fine crumble forms. Stir through the pistachio nuts.

To serve, sprinkle chocolate and pistachio crumble on individual serving plates. Place a teaspoon of mascarpone in the centre of the plate to secure the meringue. Top the meringues with a dollop of whipped mascarpone cream and poached cherries. Drizzle with a little of the sugar syrup and

garnish with a few fresh cherries.

Notes

To wow your friends, pipe meringue mixture into the shape of mushroom caps and stems before cooking to make your dessert look like the ‘forest floor’. Join the mushroom cap and stem with melted chocolate. Meringues can be made in advance and stored in an airtight container.

This recipe uses NEFF’s ovens with FullSteam. We use Australian tablespoons and cups: 1 teaspoon equals 5 ml; 1 tablespoon equals 20 ml; 1 cup equals 250 ml. All herbs are fresh (unless specified) and cups are lightly packed. All vegetables are medium size and peeled, unless specified. All eggs are 55–60 g, unless specified.

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