



**October 2002**

## **Pears**

Originally the pear was considered a more superior fruit than the apple, this was seen in Greece and Rome in 300BC where advance techniques were developed for grafting of pear stocks, and there are many references to many varieties of pears, but the apple is hardly mentioned. During the Middle Ages in Britain and Europe a great deal of care was taken in raising pears, one in particular became regarded as a fruit in its own right, the Warden Pear. It was a highly prized dessert pear raised by the Cistercian monks from an abbey in Bedfordshire.

The pear is not native to the America's, the first immigrants brought over seeds, which did not grow true to the variety, and from these seeds many good American strains were raised. Pears should be picked just before they are ripe, this is because they over ripen very fast. For storage the pears can be sliced and dried or canned for winter use. Pears are generally used as a dessert going well with the addition of red wine, vanilla, almond or chocolate. Another use is in chutney's and relishes and preserves. In Italy pears are eaten with Parmesan or Pecorino cheese.

### **Poached pears in red wine**

1 bottle of red wine

3/4c sugar

3T Honey

1/2 Lemon-juiced

1 cinnamon stick

1 Vanilla bean-split length wise.

2inch piece of orange rind

1 Clove

1 black peppercorn

-place all the above ingredients in a sauce pan large enough to stand 4 pears upright init.

-heat gently, stirring til the sugar is dissolved.

4 Pears- firm and ripe.

-Peel the pears, leaving the stem intact, and remove a slice off the base so that they will stand up in the pan.

-place the pears in the pan and simmer uncovered for 20-35mins, until tender.

-carefully remove the pears and continue to boil the poaching liquid until it is reduced by half.

-Let cool, strain over pears, then chill for 3 hours. Serve on individual plates and top with some poaching sauce.

-For an extra special dessert you can drizzle some of the following chocolate sauce over the top.

### **Chocolate sauce**

4oz Semi sweet chocolate- chopped

2T Coffee-strong and black

2T Butter

1T Rum

-melt in a double boiler

2 egg yolks-beat into choco mix

2 egg white- beaten til frothy then beat into choco mix.

**Ginger baked pears**

4 Pears- peeled, cut in half with the core removed and arranged cut side down in a single layer in a buttered baking dish.

1 1/4c whip cream

1/4c sugar

1/2t Vanilla extract

1/4t cinnamon

pinch nutmeg

1t ginger-freshly grated

-mix the last 6 ingredients in a bowl and pour over the pears. Bake 30-35mins @ 375°F, until the pears are tender and lightly browned on top. The cream should be thick and bubbly. Cool slightly before serving.

**Pear oven relish**

3 Peaches-peeled, pitted and coarsely chopped

3 Pears-peeled, cored and coarsely chopped

4 large tomatoes-peeled and chopped

2 large onions-peeled and finely chopped

1 large green pepper- chopped

1 celery stalk-chopped

1 1/2c Sugar

1 1/2c Cider vinegar

1T Allspice

1T pickling salt

-Bring all the ingredients to a rolling boil, stirring occasionally.

-Transfer to a roasting pan and bake uncovered for 1 1/2hours at 375°F, until the relish is thickened.

If you are canning, then remove the hot jars from the canner and ladle in the relish 1/2inch from the top. Secure lid and process for 10mins for the 1/2pint and 15mins for the pint jars.

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