




Amy LaBelle's Red Wine Spiced Poached Pear

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A healthy alternative to dessert, wine-poached pears are elegant, beautiful, and easy to make. Serve at any temperature, accented with whipped cream, ice cream or whipped sweetened ricotta. What's more, poached pears taste even better the next day, so feel free to make these ahead!

2 large oranges, blood oranges if in season

6 ripe but firm small pears (D'anjou if available)

2 cups LaBelle Winery Red Alchemy

¼ cup The Winemaker's Kitchen Buzz'd Raw Honey

3 tablespoons brown sugar

1 star anise (optional)

1 cinnamon stick

¼ teaspoon ground cardamom

Zest and juice one of the oranges and pour the juice in a medium bowl. Slice the remaining orange into ¼-inch rounds. Peel the pears with a veggie peeler, leaving them whole and stem on. Add the pears to the bowl with the orange juice and toss to coat to prevent the pear from oxidizing and to begin to build flavor. Choose a non-reactive pot that will just fit the pears. Add the orange slices, red wine, honey, sugar, star anise, cinnamon stick, and cardamom. Bring the liquid to a rolling boil over medium-high heat, then lower the heat and add in the pears and orange juice they've been sitting in. Cover and let simmer gently for 20 to 30 minutes, occasionally turning them gently using a wooden spoon, until the pears have softened (a toothpick should insert to the middle easily). Transfer the pears back to the bowl with a slotted spoon. Simmer the remaining liquid for a few minutes until it reduces in volume by 1/3 and thickens a bit. Place pears upright in the poaching liquid until they have cooled enough to serve. Serve poached pears warm or cold with a little bit of the cooking syrup drizzled on top, and some orange zest for garnish. You may also refrigerate them in the poaching liquid overnight to serve at a later time. Save extra poaching liquid for other uses such as pancake syrup.

