

Chestnut & Pear Tarte Tatin



A. Prepare the chestnut puree:

20 chestnuts, cooked and peeled

1/2 cup brown sugar

1/4 cup caster sugar

1/2 cup water

1 tsp vanilla extract

Pinch of salt

Add sugars and water in a small pot and heat until the sugar is dissolved. Gently simmer for 3mins. In another pot, add chestnuts and fill with water to cover an inch above the chestnuts. Bring to the boil and let cook for 20mins or until soft.

Drain then place cooked chestnuts into a blender. Blitz with half of the prepared sugar syrup until a smooth puree forms. Add in remaining sugar syrup, vanilla extract and a pinch of salt. Mix to combine. Pass this puree through a sieve to arrive at a smooth, lump free puree.



B. Make the Tart

4 Beurre Bosc pears*
1/2 cup caster sugar (110g)
1T caster sugar (extra)
1T lemon juice
25g unsalted butter, chopped
1 sheet ready rolled puff pastry
200g sweetened chestnut puree
(chilled)

**for presentation purposes, choose tall, slim pears which are all the same size*

Preheat oven to 220C.

Peel pears and slice in half from the tip to the base. Remove centre core/stalk and use a melon baller to scoop out a cavity where the core usually sits. Add pear halves to a large bowl and gently toss with 1T sugar and 1T lemon juice.

Use your fry pan as a guide and cut out the pastry into a round slightly large than the pan.

Melt the butter in your non-stick oven-safe fry pan over med-high heat. Sprinkle with remaining sugar then reduce heat to med-low until a rich caramel forms.

Give the pan a shake from time to time to prevent burnt spots.

Fill cavity of pears with a scoop of sweetened chestnut puree. Flatten the puree along the surface of the pear so that it does not bulge out from the profile of the pear. Arrange the pears on top of the caramel, rounded side down.

When the caramel starts bubbling, turn off the heat and carefully place the pastry over the pears. Tuck in any overlapping edges. Make a vent in the centre of the pastry by cutting an X.

Place the pan into the oven, reduce heat to 200C and cook for 25mins or until golden and flaky.

Stand the tart in the pan for 5mins.

Just before serving, place your hand on the pastry and give the tart a gentle twist to help release it. Place your serving plate to cover and invert in one motion to turn out to reveal the upside down tart.

Serve immediately with a dollop of cream or vanilla ice cream.

800g of fresh chestnuts produces approx 500g once cooked and peeled