

Stephanie's Simple Poached Fruit & Crumble

Season: Autumn/Winter

Serves: 30 tastes in the classroom or 6 at home

For the poached fruit

The key to poaching fruit is to have sufficient depth of syrup in the pan to cover the fruit. Poaching is also best if done in batches to increase the flavour and colour of the syrup.

Poaching syrups can be made and stored in the refrigerator for at least two weeks (strained of any solids or flavourings).

All you need to poach fruit is a tea towel, chopping board and knife to chop up the fruit into manageable chunks, and a good saucepan and a strainer. Make your sugar syrup, then poach the cut fruit in the liquid over a low heat until tender.

Some key elements:

- The dish should be achievable in 35 minutes.
- It should feature the fruit rather than batter, custard or other topping.
- It should use as little cream, butter and sugar as possible.
- Above all, it should be DELICIOUS!!!!

Sugar syrups for poaching: 2 parts water to 1 part sugar

- Flavour with lavender, scented geranium, lemon verbena, citrus blossom, lime or lemon zest and juice, cardamom, scented rose petals, pandanus leaves, vanilla bean, grated ginger, tarragon.
- Infuse to desired strength, then strain.

Most poaching syrups can be turned into delicate jellies (dilute with extra water if too sweet), sharpen with a few drops of lemon juice. Use leaf gelatine – 6 leaves will set 600 ml of syrup to a firm jelly.

Poaching syrup can also be used to brush onto raw fruit that is to be baked on a sheet of bread or pastry, or is to be grilled, e.g. chunks of pineapple, raw stone fruit.

Substitutes for wine and liqueurs in recipes

Any alcohol in a wine is destroyed once it is heated so technically there is no alcoholic content at all in a dish that is baked or boiled. However, many schools have a no-alcohol policy.

- Verjuice (especially the pink one made with sangiovese grapes by Maggie Beer products)
- Herbs such as bay, scented geraniums, lemon verbena etc.
- Small quantity of good-quality balsamic vinegar
- Commercial products such as 'apple syrup' or 'berry syrup'.

For the crumble

Crumbles are easy once you know how. Remember to maximise fruit and minimise crumble. Suitable fruit includes uncooked raspberries or other berries; cooked rhubarb, apples or quinces; poached drained stone fruit; or a combination. Use a shallow dish for speed in baking.

Equipment:

metric measuring scales, cups
and spoons
2 medium mixing bowls
mixing spoon
1-litre oven-proof dish

Ingredients:

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup brown sugar
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp ground ginger or cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain flour
2 tbsp rolled oats
60 g unsalted butter
3 cups cooked fruit

What to do:

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C.
2. Prepare all of the ingredients based on the instructions in the ingredients list.
3. Mix the sugar, baking powder and ground ginger or cinnamon together in a bowl.
4. In another bowl, add the flour and oats. Crumble the butter into the mix and use your fingers to squeeze the ingredients together and form pea-sized pieces.
5. Toss the flour mixture in with the sugar mixture.
6. Butter the oven-proof dish.
7. Spoon the cooked fruit into the baking dish, then cover with the crumble.
8. Bake for 30 minutes or until the topping is golden brown and bubbling at the edges.

