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Pear Butter with Pear and Gruyere Biscuits

Julia Hoang, 2012 First Place

Pear Butter, yields about 4-6 half-pint jars

INGREDIENTS

4 lbs D'Anjou pears, roughly chopped, do not peel or core them

1 star anise

2 tablespoons fresh ginger, roughly chopped

13/4 cup water

1/4 cup lemon juice

2-3 cups sugar

1/3 cup brown sugar

1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom

1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

1 teaspoon lemon zest

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Put the chopped pears, star anise and ginger into a large pot. Add the water and lemon juice. Bring to a boil and then reduce to simmer, cover and cook for about 25-45 minutes until the pears are completely soft. Remove from heat.
- 2. Remove and discard the star anise. Ladle the entire pear mixture into a chinoise, food mill or fine sieve. Force the mixture through into a large bowl to collect all the liquids and puree. Discard all the remaining solids.
- 3. Measure the puree and pour into a large, heavy bottom pot. For every cup of puree, add 1 1/2 cups of sugar. Add the brown sugar, cardamom, nutmeg and lemon zest. You may season to taste and adjust if necessary.
- 4. Cook on medium heat, stirring often. Take care not to allow the puree to stick to the bottom of the pan and burn. Cook between 45 minutes 2 hours until the mixture is quite thick, the consistency of applesauce.
- 5. When the pear butter is ready, store into airtight jars and refrigerate, or follow proper canning techniques for longer term storage.

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