

Fricassée of Winter Fruits with Vanilla Ice Cream

I first made this comforting winter fruit medley to serve for dessert at the end of a twelve-course wine dinner at Daniel. After that many courses and that much wine, diners want something sweet, but not too sweet, and nothing over the top. The fruits—pears, apples, apricots, oranges, and prunes—are sautéed with a little Armagnac, which adds a warm, sophisticated flavor that is a good match for many wines.

Makes 6 servings

Components

Vanilla Ice Cream (homemade or store-bought)

Winter Fruit Medley

Perfect Match

2005 Zind-Humbrecht Gewurztraminer Clos Windsbuhl, Alsace, France

Winter Fruit Medley

- 1 orange
- 1 lemon
- 2 cups plus 2 Tbsp (500 g/17.6 oz) water
- 2 cups (400 g/14.1 oz) granulated sugar
- 3 dried apricots, halved
- 3 prunes, halved
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 3 pears (Bartlett or Bosc)
- 3 apples (Macoun or Fuji)

1. Using a vegetable peeler, remove the peel in strips from the orange and lemon. With a paring knife, cut off any of the white pith from the strips. Using a chef's knife, cut the peel into thin strips.
2. Cut the remaining white pith off from the exterior of the orange. Using a paring knife, cut out each segment and set aside. Juice the remaining lemon and reserve the juice.
3. In a medium saucepan, combine the water and sugar and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the orange and lemon peel strips and boil for 10 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and add the apricots, prunes, and vanilla bean. Set aside to cool to room temperature.
4. Peel and core the pears and apples and cut them each into 8 wedges. Place them into a large bowl and toss them with the reserved lemon juice.
5. Strain the candied citrus zest and dried fruit and set aside.

Assembly

- 2 Tbsp (30 g/1 oz) unsalted butter
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise and seeds scraped
- 2 1/2 Tbsp (30 g/1 oz) granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup (60 g/2.1 oz) Armagnac or brandy

In a large sauté pan over high heat, melt the butter with the vanilla bean pod and seeds. Add the pear and apple slices and cook, stirring or tossing frequently, until they are tender, about 5 minutes. Add the strained citrus zest and dried fruit and the sugar and cook for another 2 to 3 minutes, or until the sugar begins to caramelize. Add the orange segments and Armagnac and cook for 2 minutes, tossing frequently. Remove the vanilla bean pods, divide the fricassée equally among 6 shallow bowls, and serve each with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

