



CARAMELIZED VANILLA FIGS *with* GOAT CHEESE *and* GRILLED PAPAYAS

Serves 4

- 1 vanilla bean, halved lengthwise
Juice of 1 large orange
- 1/2 cup mango juice
- 1/4 cup agave syrup
- 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 small papayas, halved lengthwise,
seeds removed
- 2 cups fresh black mission figs,
stemmed and halved
- 2 tablespoons crumbled fresh goat
cheese
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh mint

Grilling introduces a whole new dimension of flavor to ripe fruit, such as honey-sweet papayas. The figs are poached in mango juice with vanilla and topped with a little goat cheese and chopped mint. The salty tanginess of the cheese totally balances the sweetness of the fruit, making a dessert that pleases on every level.

1. Use the back of a paring knife to scrape the vanilla seeds from the bean and then add the seeds and bean to a medium saucepan. Pour in the orange juice, mango juice, agave syrup, and lemon juice and add 1/2 cup of water. Bring to a boil over high heat until it becomes like maple syrup in consistency, about 10 minutes. Place the papaya halves on a large plate cut side up and brush 1/4 cup of the syrup over them. Set aside.
2. Add the figs to the remaining sauce in the saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the figs are tender but still hold their shape and the liquid is thick and reduced by half, 10 to 12 minutes. Turn off the heat and use a slotted spoon to transfer the figs to a medium bowl. Set the sauce aside.
3. Prepare a medium-hot charcoal or gas grill.
4. Set the papayas cut side down on the grill, cover, and cook until the papayas have grill marks, 5 to 6 minutes.
5. Use tongs to transfer each papaya half to a plate. Divide the figs among the papayas, then drizzle with the remaining sauce. Sprinkle with the goat cheese and mint and serve.