

PARKLANDS FOOD FEST

CHEESECAKE GNOCCHI

Serves 8

ANNA POLYVIOPUNK



INGREDIENTS

Cheesecake Mixture

600g cream cheese
180g caster sugar
2 eggs
20g white chocolate, melted
1/2 vanilla bean,
split and seeds scraped
1 handful edible flowers, to garnish

Poached Stone Fruit

400g caster sugar
1 vanilla bean,
split and seeds scraped
2 white peaches, stones removed,
thinly sliced (use a mandolin
if you have one)
4 yellow peaches, stones removed,
cut into 10 thin wedges each

Biscuit Crumbs

1 vanilla bean,
split and seeds scraped
40g unsalted butter,
at room temperature
120g digestive biscuits
(plain sweet cookies)

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 165°C (320°F). Line the bottom of an 18 cm (7 inch) square or round cake tin with baking paper and then foil. Grease the tin and stand it on a baking tray. Set aside.

In an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese until smooth. When the mixture is smooth, scrape down the side, add the sugar and beat until combined.

Turn the electric mixer off and scrape down the side of the bowl, then with the mixer on slow speed add the eggs one at a time, making sure the first egg is completely combined before adding the next one.

Reduce the speed to medium and add the melted chocolate and the vanilla seeds. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin.

Bake in the oven for 25–30 minutes, then check it by tapping it gently: it will wobble slightly. If it's too wobbly bake for a further 5 minutes. Remove the cake from the oven and set aside to cool.

Once the cheesecake has cooled, transfer it to an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and beat the cheesecake until it is just softened and there are no lumps.

Meanwhile, line a baking tray with baking paper. If you like, you can rule lines on the back of the baking paper to use as a guide for piping the gnocchi mixture. Using a plain size 15 piping (icing) nozzle, pipe lines of the mixture across the lined baking paper and put it in the freezer for at least 30 minutes until frozen*.

Meanwhile, poach the fruit: in a medium saucepan, bring the sugar and the vanilla seeds with 400 ml (14 fl oz) water to the boil over medium heat. Lay the sliced fruit on a tray. When the sugar syrup is ready, remove from the heat and pour over the slices of fruit. Cover the surface with plastic wrap and set aside to cool in the refrigerator.

Make biscuit crumbs. In a small saucepan, combine the vanilla bean and seeds with the butter and bring it to the boil. Keep cooking until the butter has coloured slightly and has a nutty smell. Once it has boiled, remove from the heat and discard the vanilla pod.

Put the biscuits in a food processor and process to make coarse crumbs. Tip into a bowl. Pour the butter mixture over the biscuit crumbs and mix until well combined. Refrigerate until needed.

To assemble, remove the cheesecake gnocchi from the freezer and cut into 3 cm (1 inch) pieces. Place 10 gnocchi pieces on each plate. Remove the fruit slices from the sugar syrup and place on paper towel to drain the excess syrup. Arrange the slices of stone fruit evenly among the eight plates. Spoon the biscuit crumbs evenly among the plates.

Drizzle with the vanilla sugar syrup and then garnish with the edible flowers.

*Make sure the cheesecake is frozen, otherwise it will be too soft and difficult to handle to place on the plate.

