

Lavender-Poached Peaches & Blackberries

(about 10 servings)

Ingredients:

4 cups Water
1 cup Orange juice
10 tbsp Honey
Ten 4" long sprigs fresh lavender
1 tbsp Vanilla Extract
10 just ripe med. Peaches
2 cups fresh Blackberries
Low-fat Vanilla frozen Yogurt or Vanilla Ice Cream

Preparation:

Combine water, orange juice, honey, large lavender sprigs and vanilla in a large nonreactive saucepan (e. g. Stainless Steel).
Bring just to a boil, stirring until the honey dissolves.
Add whole peaches to the boiling liquid and cook, gently turning, until the skins start to loosen, 1 to 2 minutes.
Remove the peaches to a colander with a slotted spoon; rinse under cold water and let drain.
Meanwhile, adjust the heat so the poaching liquid boils briskly and begins to reduce.
Using a paring knife, peel the peaches and add the skins to the boiling liquid.
Cut the peaches in half vertically, keeping the halves intact.
Remove the pits, if possible; if it's too difficult, leave them in until after poaching.
Adjust the heat to a bare simmer.
Return the peaches to the pan and poach until they are not quite tender when pierced with a fork, 3 to 7 minutes; they should still hold their shape.
Transfer them to a nonreactive bowl with a slotted spoon.
When cool enough to handle, gently cut out and discard any remaining pits.
Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.
Add blackberries to the barely simmering liquid in the pan.
Poach for 1 to 2 minutes.
Remove them to a small bowl with a slotted spoon.
Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.
Adjust the heat so the poaching liquid boils briskly and cook until reduced to about 2/3 cup, 14 to 18 minutes, watching carefully to prevent scorching.
Strain the liquid through a fine sieve into a nonreactive bowl, pressing down on the solids to force through as much liquid as possible; discard solids.
Cover and refrigerate the syrup for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.
To serve, let the fruit and syrup come to almost room temperature.
Arrange the peach halves in individual serving bowls.
Spoon a small scoop of frozen yogurt or ice cream into each half, if desired.
Top with the blackberries and drizzle with the fruit syrup.