



VANILLA PANNA COTTA, MACERATED RASPBERRIES

(Serves 4)

INTRODUCTION:

For the best tasting panna cotta you have to use a real vanilla pod. Choose one that's fat and soft and which is full of seeds and natural oil. Madagascar vanilla pods are probably the best if you can find them. Complement the vanilla with fresh sweetened double cream that's set with a little gelatine: just enough so that it holds the shape of the mould that it has been set in.

The perfect fruit to serve with the panna cotta has to be raspberries, either served naturally or in this case quickly macerated in raspberry liquor with a little squeeze of lime and more vanilla.

FOR THE PANNA COTTA

INGREDIENTS:

600ml double cream
150ml milk
90g caster sugar
4 leaves or 7g powdered gelatine
2 tbsp icing sugar

METHOD:

1. Soak the gelatine in a bowl of ice cold water for 5 minutes.
2. Place the milk, cream and sugar into a pan.
3. Split the vanilla pod in half lengthways and scrape the seeds into this cream mixture and bring it up to boiling point.
4. Remove the gelatine from the water. It should be soft by now and add it to the boiling liquid. Whisk until the gelatine has completely dissolved, and then pass the mix through a fine sieve.
5. Put the mix in a bowl and place over another bowl of ice water. Stir occasionally. When the vanilla seeds become buoyant in the mix, and you can see it thicken slightly: then it's ready.
6. Pour into small metal dariole or pudding moulds.
7. Place in the fridge to set for a couple of hours.

FOR THE MACERATED RASPBERRIES

INGREDIENTS:

2 Punnets of fresh Raspberries
1 Vanilla pod
100ml Water
100g Castor Sugar
50ml Raspberry Liquor
Juice of one Lime



METHOD:

1. Boil the water and sugar in a saucepan to make a syrup, leave to cool.
2. Place one punnet of raspberries in a food processor. Puree, then strain to remove the seeds.
3. Heat a saucepan. When hot add the second punnet of raspberries and sweat slightly.
4. Add a vanilla pod split and scraped, some sugar syrup, raspberry coulis and a dash of raspberry liquor.
5. Heat for 1-2 minutes and remove from the heat.
6. Add a whole juiced lime and leave to cool.

TO SERVE:

1. To remove the panna cotta, place the dariole mould in a bowl of semi-warm water and leave for 10-15 seconds. The water must not fully cover the mould.
2. When the time is up, remove from the water and carefully pull the set panna cotta away from the sides of the mould.
3. You will create an air bubble as you are pulling the panna cotta away from the side of the mould. This bubble will then travel to the bottom of the mould and force the panna cotta to fall out.
4. Have a plate ready to place it onto, serve with the raspberries spooned over the top.

TOP TIPS:

1. Bring the cream to the boil.
2. Make sure you do not overheat the mould when turning it out or you will melt the panna cotta.