Pears with Cocoa Sauce and Walnuts

2 pear desserts, each with 2 pear halves, half the cocoa sauce and 10 g/0.35 oz walnuts | Active 14 min | Cook 10 min | Total 25 min (warm service)

Ingredients

- 320 g prepared ripe firm pear (11 1/4 oz), about 2 medium pears, halved lengthways and cored, stems removed, tender skins left on
- 60 ml water (1/4 cup), for the pears
- 60 ml pasteurized milk (1/4 cup), for sauce
- 6 g unsweetened cocoa powder (about 1 tbsp)
- 15 g granulated sugar (about 1 tbsp plus 3/4 tsp)
- 5 g unsalted butter (about 1 tsp)
- 20 g ready-to-eat chopped walnuts (3/4 oz), divided into two 10 g portions

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Fork or small whisk, Spoon, Oven mitts, Food thermometer used outside the microwave, Microwave-safe shallow casserole, at least 1.5 L/about 1 2/3 US qt usable capacity and 20 ×14 cm/about 8 ×5 1/2 in usable inside base, Microwave-safe vented cover, Microwave-safe jug, at least 500 ml/17 US fl oz measured capacity, Knife and board, Teaspoon or melon baller for cores, Tongs, Two shallow serving plates

Allergens

Milk, Walnuts. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Arrange the four cored pear halves cut-side down in one layer in the shallow casserole, thick ends toward the outside. Add all 60 ml water. Cover with a vent and microwave at 1000 W full power for 4 minutes. Carefully turn the halves with tongs, rotate their positions and cook 2-4 minutes more until the thickest flesh yields readily to a spoon edge. Stand covered for 2 minutes.

2. Meanwhile whisk the cocoa, sugar and 15 ml/1 tbsp of the measured milk into a smooth paste in the 500 ml jug. Gradually whisk in the remaining 45 ml milk. Once the pear cooking is complete, microwave the sauce at 70% power in 30-second bursts, stirring between each, for about 1-2 minutes until gently simmering and smooth. Attend it so it does not boil over.

3. Stir all the butter into the hot sauce until melted. Lift the four tender pear halves onto the two plates, two halves per person. The plain pear cooking water is not part of the cocoa sauce and may be discarded.

4. Divide the entire cocoa sauce equally between the plates and scatter 10 g chopped walnuts over each. Serve warm. No extra cream, chocolate chips or herb garnish is included.

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Pear water is separate

The 60 ml steaming water softens the fruit. It is not poured into the measured cocoa sauce.

Divide the whole sauce

The complete milk-cocoa-sugar-butter sauce belongs across the two plates; 10 g walnuts on each finishes the measured dessert.

Ingredient labels

Milk and butter contain milk; walnuts are tree nuts. Cocoa or plant-based substitutes may have additional label allergens. The almond variation changes the nut ingredient rather than removing it.

A useful detail

The 25-minute warm-service plan allows 8 minutes of preparation, up to 8 minutes of pear heating and 2 minutes of sauce heating, the 2-minute pear stand and 5 minutes for whisking and plating. One 1000 W microwave heats fruit and sauce in sequence; the cold sauce paste can be mixed during the pear stage. Firmer pears can need extra short bursts.

Another way

Replace 20 g/3/4 oz walnuts with 20 g/0.7 oz ready-to-eat sliced almonds. Almond becomes the nut ingredient; the same measured division applies.

Use 60 ml/1/4 cup unsweetened soy drink and 5 g/about 1 tsp plant-based spread in the sauce instead of milk and butter. Soy or other spread allergens may be added; check both labels.

Keep it well

Refrigerate cooked pears, cocoa sauce and dry walnuts separately within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below; use fruit and sauce within 2 days or an earlier milk deadline. Reheat fruit and sauce in separate microwave-safe covered vessels with short bursts and stirs or turns, stand 2 minutes and check 165°F/74°C throughout. Add dry walnuts only after serving.