

Baked Pears and Prunes with Red Wine Sauce (Pere Cotte con le Prugne)

Serves 6;  Page 71

Active: 20 min.; Total: 2 1/2 hr.

In this simple dessert, whole pears are baked for hours in a red wine syrup until spoonably soft. Prunes add depth and complexity to the sauce, so choose the highest-quality you can find for this dish. This recipe calls for Bosc pears, but you can substitute any larger variety of pears, such as Bartlett or D'Anjou.

- 6** large Bosc pears
- 2** cups red wine
- 2/3** cup sugar
- 24** large prunes, pitted

1 Heat the oven to 350°. Using a melon baller, scoop from the base of each pear to remove its core and discard the cores.

2 In a 12-inch shallow saucepan, combine the wine with the sugar and 2 cups water and bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Lay the pears in the syrup, distribute the prunes evenly around the pears, and bake until the pears are tender and the liquid is reduced, about 2 hours.

3 Transfer the pan to a rack and let the pears cool for 10 minutes in the syrup. Place 1 pear each onto a serving plate and spoon over the prunes and red wine sauce to serve.