



River Cottage Recipes

Valentines Day 14th February



Valentine's recipe by Gill Meller
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Rhubarb and Meringue Fool

This is a wonderfully indulgent pudding, which we often serve at River Cottage HQ for Valentines Day. We use the first of the season's rhubarb, which is usually sourced from Yorkshire. The rhubarb is grown in the dark, giving it a beautiful pink colour, and a delicate tender flavour. The rhubarb is gently cooked to make compote, which is then combined with the meringue, cream and yogurt.

ESSE ovens are perfect for making meringues. Use the bottom of the oven, making sure you check them every so often and as long as the oven isn't too hot, you won't have any problems.

Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients

Rhubarb compote

500g Washed rhubarb cut into 1 inch chunks
100g sugar
50mls water

Meringue

Free-range egg whites, 2
Caster sugar, 100g

Fool

300ml of double cream
300ml organic yogurt
1 vanilla pod
Up to 50g caster sugar
2 tbls runny honey

Wine glasses to serve

First make the meringues:

Put the egg whites into a clean mixing bowl and start to whisk. At first you'll get great big frothy bubbles, but as you carry on whisking, the egg whites will stiffen and the bubbles will get smaller.

When the egg whites have formed soft peaks, gradually spoon the sugar on to them. Whisk again, so that all the sugar is blended into the egg white. The mixture will get thicker and shiny, like shaving foam. When it's so thick that you can turn the bowl upside down without anything sliding out (do this cautiously at first), then you can stop.

Tear off a piece of baking parchment and use it to line a baking sheet. Scoop up a dollop of meringue with a spoon and using another one to help it off, spoon onto the lined baking sheet. Space the meringues out evenly.

Place the baking sheet in the bottom oven and leave for 3 - 4 hours or until the meringues can be lifted off the paper easily and are beginning to look golden in colour and slightly cracked. Remove the meringues from the oven and leave them to cool completely.

Place the rhubarb in a large pan with the water and sugar. Spread it out so it's as close to single layer as possible. Put a lid on and cook gently for 5 - 10 mins on the lower of the hot plates until soft. Don't stir it too much and it will retain some of its shape.

Remove the rhubarb from the heat and strain through a sieve to remove any excess juice.

Allow to cool

To assemble the fool

Combine the cream, yogurt, sugar, vanilla seeds and honey in a large bowl. Whisk until it forms fairly stiff peaks. Fold in half the rhubarb and the meringue, broken into coarse pieces.

Divide the remaining compote between the glasses and top with the fool mixture. Drizzle a little of the sweet rhubarb juice and serve at once.