



# Poached Pears

**Season:** Autumn/Winter

**Type:** Sweets & Drinks

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Serves:** 30 tastes in the classroom  
or 8 serves at home

**Fresh from the garden:** edible flowers, lemons, oranges, pears, verbena leaves

**Recipe Source:** Desley Insall, Kitchen Specialist, Collingwood College

When pears are in season, they are abundant and fragrant. This recipe complements their natural floral flavour with vanilla and citrus for a delicious dessert that can be served warm or cold, with a spoonful of yoghurt, or just as is.

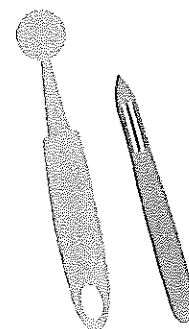
**Note:** don't throw away the vanilla bean at the end – it can be re-used for another batch of pears. Make sure when you're serving up that there is about half a pear for each diner.

## Equipment:

tea towel  
chopping board  
kitchen knife  
vegetable peeler  
citrus juicer  
metric measuring cups  
very large saucepan  
or stock pot  
melon baller  
slotted spoon  
colander

## Ingredients:

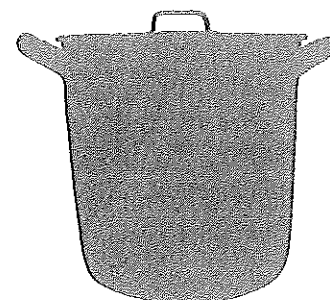
1 orange  
1 lemon  
16–20 pears  
2 L cold water  
1 kg sugar  
1 vanilla bean  
edible flowers, to garnish  
6 verbena leaves, to garnish  
(optional)



## What to do:

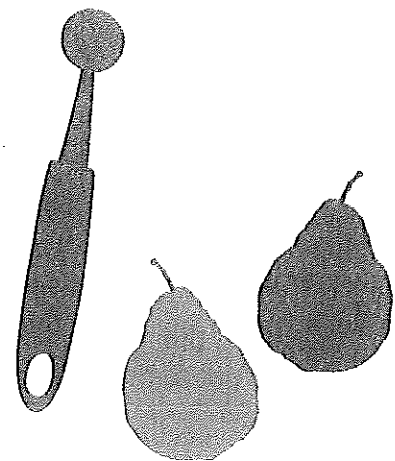
### To make the syrup:

- Peel the zest from the orange and the lemon with a vegetable peeler.
- If you want to add lemon juice to the syrup, get out a chopping board and cut the lemon in half with a large knife. Then juice the lemon using a lemon juicer. Adding the lemon juice makes the pears stay a pale yellow colour, rather than turning dark as they cook.
- Pour the water into a very large saucepan.
- Add the sugar, the orange peel, the lemon peel and the vanilla bean. Bring to the pot to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes to infuse the flavours.



**To prepare the pears:**

- Wash the pears. Check each pear carefully for caterpillar holes. (Discard any that have caterpillar holes.)
- Peel the pears with the vegetable peeler.
- Cut the pears in half and scoop out the cores with a melon baller.
- To stop the pears from going brown, use a large slotted spoon to lower the pears into the syrup straight away. The acid from the lemon and orange prevents the pears from oxidising, which is why they turn brown if left in the air too long.
- Once all the pears are in the pot, gently heat the pot to barely simmering.
- Poach the pears until they just soft when pierced with a knife, and then turn off the heat.
- Leave the pears in the syrup to cool.
- To serve, use the slotted spoon to lift the pears out of the pot and put one half in each bowl. (One pear half per person.) Decorate the pears with edible flowers.



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## Menu 21

*Zucchini with mint-  
flecked bocconcini*

*Pumpkin gnocchi  
with sage*

*Celeriac and apple  
remoulade*

*Simple carrot  
and walnut cake*

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### *Zucchini with mint- flecked bocconcini*

Thinly slice about

100 g of bocconcini (fresh  
mozzarella balls) and toss  
with 12 chopped mint leaves.

Make lengthways slits in  
three zucchini (courgettes),  
but don't slice all the way  
through. Force the mint-  
flecked bocconcini into the  
slits. Oil three pieces of foil,  
and wrap each zucchini in a  
piece of foil. Bake on a tray  
in a 200°C oven for about  
15 minutes. Serve warm  
on a serving plate.







# Wheat Tortillas

**Season:** All  
**Type:** Basics & Breads  
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Serves:** 30 tastes in the classroom  
or 6 at home

**Recipe Source:** Adapted from an original by Esther Nelson

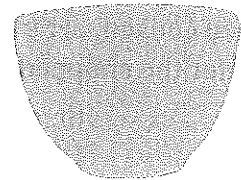
Make these Mexican flat breads as thin as possible so they cook really quickly and get really crisp – you'll be surprised at how they bubble up in the pan.

## Equipment:

metric scales, cups and spoons  
large bowl  
heavy-based frying pan

## Ingredients:

450 g plain flour  
1 tablespoon butter  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 cup warm water



## What to do:

- Mix together the flour, baking powder and salt in large bowl. Rub in butter to resemble texture of polenta. Add water slowly, mixing with your hands to make a soft dough. You may not need all the water, but add a little if the dough seems too dry.
- Knead a few minutes on floured surface until smooth and elastic. Lubricate top with oil, put back in bowl and let rest, covered for 10 minutes.
- Divide into small balls the size of golf balls and proceed to roll out into a 10 cm circle, about 1 mm thick. (Ensure you make enough for all diners to have at least half a tortilla.)
- Cook in dry heavy frying pan until top is slightly bubbly then turning on opposite side for a minute or two. Keep stacked and warm inside a clean tea towel.



# Pumpkin gnocchi with sage

Serves 4 at home or 12 tastes in the classroom

Fresh from the garden potatoes, pumpkin, sage

For the best gnocchi use nicola, desiree or Toolangi delight potatoes and a dry-fleshed variety pumpkin, such as butternut or Kent.

## Equipment

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| ovenproof serving dish    | baking tray                |
| chopping board            | grater                     |
| large knife               | metric measuring spoons    |
| peeler                    | potato ricer or            |
| medium saucepan           | Mouli food mill            |
| scales                    | coarse strainer            |
| wok                       | pastry scraper             |
| bamboo steamer with lid   | frying pan with 5 cm sides |
| bowls – 2 small, 2 medium | slotted spoon              |
| skewer                    | non-stick frying pan       |
| colander                  | heatproof board or mat     |


## Ingredients


|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 250 g potatoes  | small wedge parmesan        |
| 5 salt  | 20 large sage leaves        |
| 300 g pumpkin (250 g when peeled and seeded)            | 100 g butter                |
| 160 g plain (all-purpose) flour, plus extra for dusting | freshly ground black pepper |

## What to do

Preheat the oven to 120°C and place the ovenproof serving dish in the oven to keep warm. Set out the chopping board, knife and peeler. Peel the potatoes, cut into chunks, then place in the medium saucepan with a little salt and enough cold water to cover generously. Place over a high heat and cook for about 15 minutes.


**Peel and seed the pumpkin.** Weigh the pumpkin to make sure you have 250 g and cut into bite-sized chunks. Place the wok over a high heat and pour in enough hot water to come one-third of the way up the sides. Rest the bamboo steamer on top. Spread the pumpkin cubes in the basket, cover with the basket lid and steam for about


 10 minutes until nearly tender. **Lift the basket off the wok and transfer the pumpkin to one of the medium bowls.**

 \* Use the skewer to check if the potatoes are tender. Place the colander in the sink. **Tip the potatoes and boiling water into the colander.** Return the potatoes to the saucepan and shake over the heat to dry out. Tip the potatoes into the second medium bowl.

\* Place the flour in one of the small bowls. Dust the baking tray with the extra flour and set aside until needed. Grate the parmesan – you'll need 2 tablespoons. Place in the second small bowl and set aside.

\* Flour the workbench well, and have the measured flour close by. Squash the pumpkin and potato through the largest hole of a potato ricer or through the coarsest disc of a food mill to form a loose mound on the bench. Sprinkle with a good pinch of salt. Tip most of the flour into the coarse strainer and sprinkle it over the vegetable mound. **Quickly but lightly combine the flour and vegetables, using a pastry scraper to assist.** Knead briefly until the dough is smooth, using more flour if necessary.

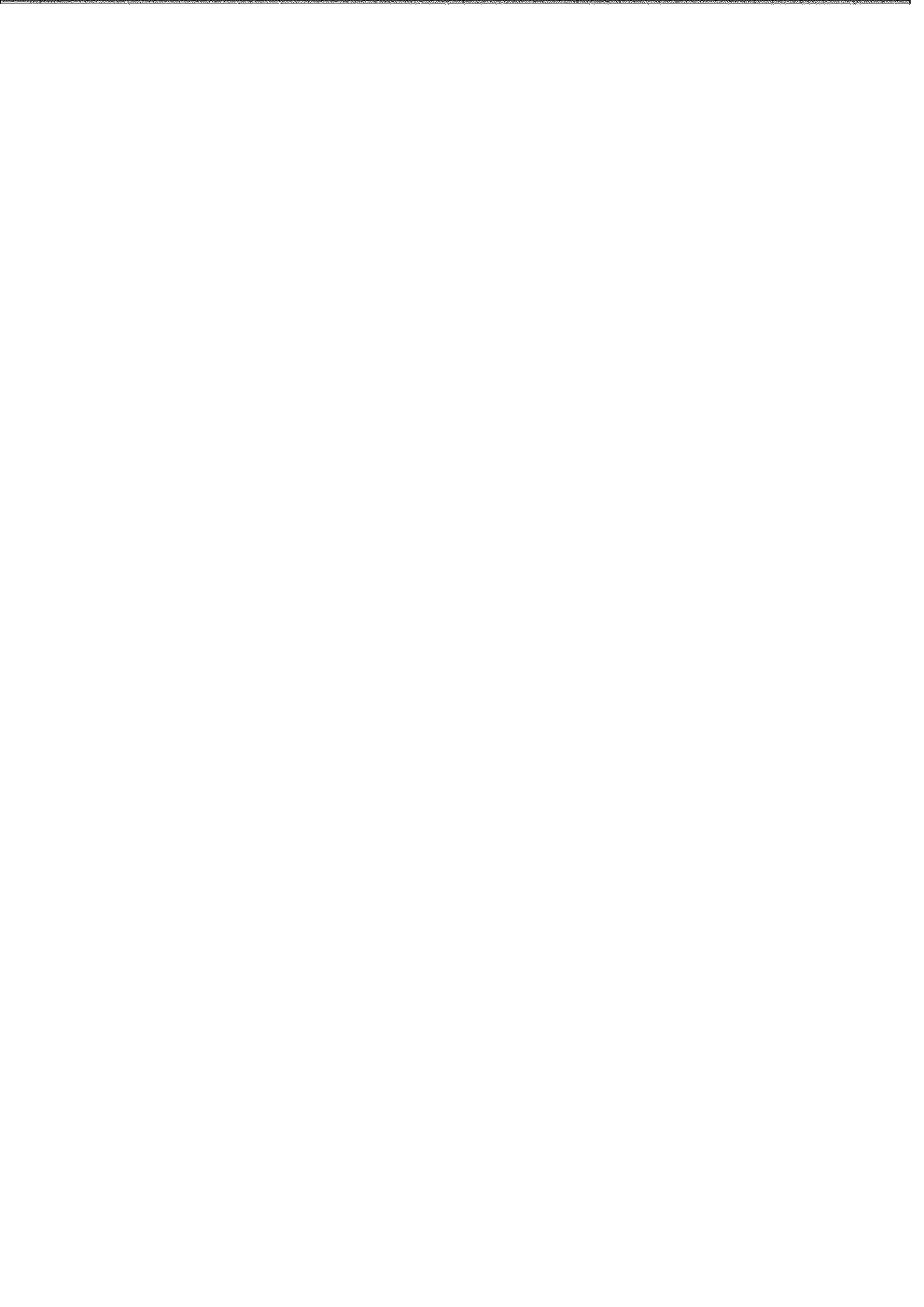
 \* **Cut the dough into 4 pieces and, using your fingers, roll each piece into a thin sausage about 2–3 cm wide.** Cut each sausage into pieces about 2 cm long and transfer to the floured baking tray.

\* Fill the high-sided frying pan with water, add 1 teaspoon of salt and bring to the boil. Drop in as many gnocchi as will fit easily in one layer.  Adjust the heat so the water is at a simmer. **When the gnocchi rise to the surface (about 3 minutes), lift out with the slotted spoon and slip into the warmed serving dish. Return the dish to the oven after adding each batch of gnocchi.** Scatter with the grated parmesan.

\* Spread the sage leaves in the non-stick frying pan and add the butter. Fry until the leaves are crisp and the butter has become a medium-brown colour. Spoon the sage leaves and butter over the gnocchi in the serving dish and add some ground pepper. Place the board or mat on the table and serve the gnocchi in the ovenproof dish.

## BOTTOM DRAWER

Interesting terms/techniques • using a potato ricer or food mill • working in batches • steaming with a bamboo basket







## Warm Beetroot & Herb Salad

**Season:** Autumn/Winter

**Type:** Salads

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Serves:** 30 tastes in the classroom  
or 6 at home

**Fresh from the garden:** beetroot, herbs

**Recipe Source:** Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation

Beetroot is a star crop – we find many ways to use it in salads and other dishes. The young green leaves of beetroot make their way into a variety of salads, while the stems and roots are cooked and added to a variety of dishes. This recipe is a lovely part of a bistro salad platter.

### Equipment:

chopping board  
kitchen knife  
metric measuring spoons  
2 clean tea towels  
large bowl  
peeler  
baking dish with lid (use aluminium foil if no lid to baking dish)  
fork  
small bowl  
skewer  
serving platters

### Ingredients:

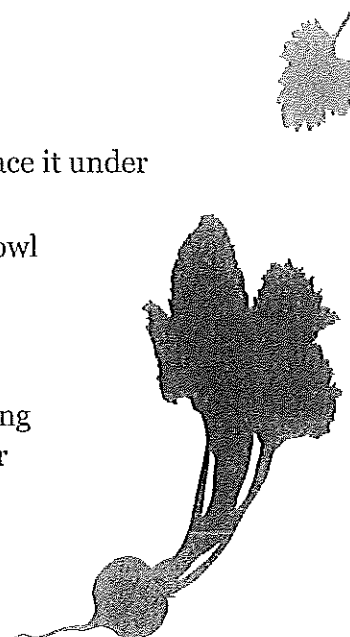
6 medium–large beetroot or 24 small beetroot (about the size of a golf ball)

### For the dressing:

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar  
1 teaspoon brown sugar  
selection of garden-picked herbs  
(e.g. mint, tarragon, parsley, chives)

### What to do:

- Preheat the oven to 200°C.
- Wash the beetroot very well.
- Set out the chopping board and knives. Dampen the tea towel and place it under the chopping board to prevent it from slipping.
- Cut off the leafy tops of the beetroot. Rinse the leafy tops in a large bowl of cold water and dry on a clean tea towel.
- Peel the beetroot, cut into 3 cm cubes and place in the baking dish.
- For the dressing, use the fork to whisk the oil, vinegar and sugar in a small bowl. Drizzle the dressing over the beetroot and shake the baking dish so that each beetroot piece is coated. Cover the dish and bake for 30 minutes until the beetroot cubes are nearly tender.





*Warm Beetroot & Herb Salad continued*

**To assemble the salad:**

- While the beetroot cubes are baking, inspect the leaves. Discard any that are ragged or yellow. Dry the good leaves and chop them roughly.
- Remove the baking dish from the oven and add the leaves to the beetroot. Stir or shake the dish to mix the leaves with the dressing, then return the dish to the oven for 10 more minutes.
- Meanwhile, rinse, dry and chop the herbs roughly.
- Check the beetroot – it's cooked when a thin skewer will slip through it easily.
- When cooked, arrange the beetroot cubes and leaves on a platter. Scatter the chopped herbs over top and drizzle any cooking juices over.

