

Pear & Dried Cranberry Strudel

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All across Wisconsin, Scandinavian and German bakeries start firing up with the onset of crisp, cool autumn days; the lines soon grow long for fresh fall-fruit pastries. For most of us, rich strudel wouldn't be an everyday affair. But with walnut oil (instead of copious amounts of butter) and fresh pears, it can, nevertheless, become a decadence-free indulgence, perfect for your next dinner party. Serve it with frozen nonfat vanilla yogurt or vanilla cr me anglaise.

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoon orange juice
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
2 teaspoons finely chopped shallots
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 cups cooked whole-wheat couscous
1 cup chopped nectarine
1 cup mixed fresh berries, such as blueberries and raspberries
2 tablespoon toasted sliced almonds, (see Tip)

COOKING DIRECTIONS

Step 1

Whisk oil, orange juice, vinegar, shallots, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add cooked couscous, nectarines, berries and almonds; gently toss to combine.

Step 2

Combine pears, dried cranberries, 1/4 cup sugar, orange zest and orange juice in a medium bowl.

Step 3

Unroll phyllo onto a clean, dry surface. Cover with a sheet of wax paper and then a damp kitchen towel. Place a dry kitchen towel with a long edge toward you on the work surface. Sprinkle the towel lightly with breadcrumbs. Lay 1 sheet of phyllo on the towel. (Keep the stack of phyllo sheets covered to prevent them from drying out while you work.) Starting at the center and working toward the edges, lightly brush the phyllo sheet with oil. Sprinkle lightly with breadcrumbs. Lay another sheet of phyllo on top; brush with oil and sprinkle with breadcrumbs. Repeat with 5 of the remaining sheets of phyllo; lay the last sheet on top and brush with oil.

Step 4

Mound the pear filling in a long 3-inch-wide strip on the phyllo stack, leaving a 2-inch border at the bottom and sides. Fold the short edges in and, starting at the long edge nearest you, roll the filling and phyllo into a cylinder, using the towel to help lift as you roll. Roll up firmly but not too tightly, to allow a little room for expansion.

Step 5

Brush the strudel with oil and sprinkle with the remaining 1 teaspoon sugar. Carefully transfer the strudel to the prepared baking sheet, placing it seam-side down. Poke several steam vents in the top using the tip of a sharp knife.

Step 6

Bake the strudel until golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool on the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Just before serving, dust with confectioners' sugar.

MAKE AHEAD TIP

Transfer frozen phyllo dough to the refrigerator to thaw the day before baking.

RECIPE TIPS

Ingredient Note: Walnut oil has a delightful nutty flavor and boasts a high ratio of monounsaturated fats. You can find it in many supermarkets and natural-foods stores. Store it in the refrigerator.

Shopping tip: The best pears for this strudel are firm yet ripe ones. Remember the cardinal rule for fruit: if it doesn't smell like anything, it won't taste like anything

NUTRITION INFO *per serving*

Calories: 211

Carbohydrates: 34g

Fat: 8g

Protein: 2g

Dietary Fiber: 3g

Saturated Fat: 1 g

Monounsaturated Fat: 2g

Cholesterol: 0mg

Potassium: 48mg

Sodium: 119mg

Echanges: 1 starch, 1 fruit, 1 ½ fat

Carbohydrate Servings: 2

