



Pavlova

Dolce, Napa Valley

by Chef Gale Gand

Easy, pretty, light and luscious, pavlova pairs perfectly with Dolce and is equally irresistible: a fluffy pillow of meringue topped with a layer of snowy whipped cream. As you bite, the crisp exterior of the meringue quickly melts into the soft interior, helped along by tangy-sweet mouthfuls of ripe fruit.

A bit of vinegar in the meringue helps the egg whites whip stiff. (Technically speaking, the acid in the vinegar loosens the bonds between the egg white molecules, freeing them up to bond with air and sugar molecules instead.) Using raspberry vinegar will add a subtle, almost ghostly raspberry flavor to the meringue, but is not necessary. If you don't care for kiwi fruit, clementine would stand in nicely—and, in summer, ripe peach or nectarine.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup egg whites,
at room temperature
(from about 4 eggs)
- 1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon raspberry vinegar
or red wine vinegar
- 1 1/4 cups heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons
light brown sugar, packed
- 2 kiwi fruits,
peeled and thinly sliced
or 1 cup of another ripe fruit,
such as peaches,
nectarines or clementines
- 10 strawberries,
green parts trimmed off,
thinly sliced or other berries,
such as raspberries
or blackberries

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 350°.

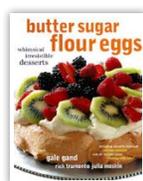
In a mixer fitted with a whisk attachment (or using a hand mixer), whip the egg whites, cream of tartar and salt in a clean, dry bowl until foamy. Add the granulated sugar, cornstarch, vanilla and vinegar and continue whipping until stiff, smooth, and glossy, about 8 minutes more.

On a sheet of parchment paper cut to fit a sheet pan, use a pencil to draw or trace a circle 9 inches in diameter. Line the sheet pan with the parchment, pencil side down (you should still be able to see the circle). Spoon the egg whites into the circle, using the back of the spoon to smooth the top and sides of the disk.

Bake in the center of the oven for 10 minutes, then reduce the heat to 300° and bake until the meringue has puffed up and cracked on the top and the surface is lightly browned to the color of *café au lait*, about 45 minutes more. Turn off the oven, prop the oven door open, and let the pavlova cool in the oven at least 30 minutes, to room temperature. This ensures a gradual cooling, which protects the delicate meringue.

Whip the cream and brown sugar together until stiff. Spoon it in the center of the cooled pavlova and spread out to within 1/2 inch of the edge. Arrange the slices of kiwi around the edge. Arrange the slices of strawberry in the middle. To serve, slice into wedges with a serrated knife.

Makes 8 to 10 servings



From Chef Gale Gand's *Butter Sugar Flour Eggs: Whimsical Irresistible Desserts* and is produced here with permission.

Chef Gale is pastry chef/partner of the newly opened Spritz Burger in Chicago, collaboration with The Hearty Boys, and partner in the Michelin one star, Tru, host of Food Network "Sweet Dreams", and author of 8 books. She produces Gale's Root Beer, has received two James Beard Awards, has been inducted to the Chicago Chefs Hall of Fame and is the mother of 3.