

Sweet Wine & Honey Roasted Pears

Serves four.

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened

4 firm-ripe pears (any variety), peeled, halved, and cored

2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons honey

½ cup sweet dessert wine, such as a late-harvest Muscat or a Viognier

⅓ to ½ cup heavy cream, at room temperature, for serving

If you want to get fancy, you can top the pears with ice cream, Devon cream, crème fraîche, or mascarpone, but plain old heavy cream is awfully good, and has the virtue of simplicity. A scattering of toasted almonds would also be welcome.

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. Smear the butter over the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking dish or small roasting pan. Set the pear halves cut side down in the dish. Drizzle 1 teaspoon of honey over each pear half. Pour in the wine. Roast for 40 minutes. Remove the dish from the oven and, using pot holders, tilt the dish so the juices pool in one corner. With a spoon, baste each pear with the juices. Continue to roast until the juices cook down to a glazy consistency and the pears are very tender and take on a light toasted color, another 15 to 20 minutes. Lift up the cut side of a pear; it should look nicely caramelized. Turn off the oven and leave in the oven to keep warm until serving time (the liquid will continue to thicken and the pears will brown a bit more).

If the juices have completely evaporated add a tablespoon or two of hot water to the pan and swirl to recreate a syrupy glaze. Drizzle the glaze over each pear. Serve warm and pass a pitcher of heavy cream to pour over. Leftovers are good at room temperature or warmed gently. —Ruth Lively

Pears from September to June

Though most of the year, you'll find several varieties of pears at the market, each with different colors and textures.

