



Selecting Fresh Pears:

- Choose pears that are fresh looking and have smooth skin.
- Avoid pears that are punctured, have bruises or other dark soft spots.
- Check the ripeness by squeezing gently near the stem; it should give in to light pressure but the middle of the pear should not be too soft or mushy.
- The color of good quality pears may not be uniform and there can be brown-speckled patches on the skin, this is an acceptable characteristic and oftentimes reflects a more intense flavor.

Measuring Fresh Pears:

½ pound fresh pears = 2 medium pears = 1 cup sliced

Handling, Ripening and Storing:

- Handle pears carefully, the skin is very fragile and is easy to bruise and puncture.
- Pears should be left at room temperature to ripen and when the skin yields to gentle pressure they are ripe and ready to eat.
- You can place ripe pears in the refrigerator to keep them fresh for 2 or 3 days.
- If you want pears to ripen quickly, place them in a paper bag at room temperature and turn them occasionally.
- Do not store pears in a sealed plastic bag or too close to each other because they will ripen too quickly and spoil.
- Pears should be stored away from other strong smelling foods because they tend to absorb smells.

Preparation and Serving:

- Gently wash pears under cool running water and pat them dry.
- Leaving the skin on is best because it contains fiber and other healthful nutrients.
- Slice off each side of the pear from top to bottom and trim around the core to get the most flesh.
- To prevent cut pears from browning, dip slices in 1 teaspoon orange, lime or lemon juice mixed with 1/3 cup water.
- Enjoy pears by themselves, with cheese, in salads, poached in fruit juice, baked into a dessert, or as a breakfast topping for oatmeal and pancakes.

Nutrition Facts: One serving = 1 small pear: Calories 86, Protein 1 gram, Carbohydrates 23 grams, Fat 0 grams, Fiber 5 grams. Pears are also a good source of Vitamin C and copper.

References: <http://oldfashionedliving.com/pears.html>, <http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=28>, <http://www.nutritiondata.com/facts/fruits-and-fruit-juices/2005/2>, <http://southernfood.about.com/library/info/blequivm.htm>

Oven Baked Pear Pancake \$\$

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

4 ripe pears, peeled, cored and sliced
4 eggs, separated into whites and yolks
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup flour
1/3 cup milk
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp baking powder
Dash of salt



Preparation:

Preheat oven to 375° F (190 °C). Prepare the pears and set aside. Combine 1/4 cup brown sugar, flour, milk, egg yolks, baking powder and dash of salt in a bowl. Mix well with a fork and set aside. Combine butter, 1/4 cup brown sugar and cinnamon in an ovenproof skillet or frying pan. Cook on stovetop until butter melts and combines with sugar. Remove from heat. Arrange the pear slices in the butter mixture in the pan and sprinkle with walnuts. Mix egg whites and remaining brown sugar in a small bowl until soft. Combine with egg yolk mixture. Pour over pear slices and bake in oven for 10 minutes until golden brown.

Nutritional information per serving: 280 calories, 13g fat, 5g saturated fat, 155mg cholesterol, 140mg sodium, 36g carbohydrate, 3g dietary fiber, 24g sugars, 7g protein.

Approximate Pricing Scale

\$ = \$10-\$15 \$\$ = \$15-\$20 \$\$\$ = \$20-\$25