



Baked meringue, cherry soup and fresh cream

MERINGUE

6 egg whites
250g caster sugar
2tsp hot water
1½tsp natural vanilla extract
1½tbs cornflour
¾tbs white vinegar

CHERRY SOUP

175ml sparkling mineral water
Juice 1 lemon
120g caster sugar
500g fresh cherries, pitted

250ml thickened cream
24 fresh cherries, pitted, stems intact
Pistachios, roughly chopped

MERINGUE: preheat oven to 200C. In the bowl of an electric mixer, whisk the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Gradually add sugar. Fold in the hot water and 1tsp vanilla. Fold in the cornflour and vinegar. Draw six 8cm circles on baking paper and invert the paper on a baking tray. Using a piping bag, pipe the meringue evenly within the marked borders to form the bases. Pipe a second layer on each outer edge to create 6 cases. Bake the meringue for 5 mins, reduce temperature to 100C and cook further for 45 mins. Turn oven off. Leave oven door ajar and rest the meringues in the oven for 30 mins.

CHERRY SOUP: put mineral water, juice and sugar in a saucepan on a low heat and stir until sugar dissolves. Add cherries, bring just to the boil and remove from the heat. Transfer the cherry mixture to a food processor or blender and blend until smooth. Strain through a fine sieve, cool, and refrigerate until required.

TO SERVE: whip the cream with the remaining vanilla extract. Place a meringue in the centre of each serving bowl and top with some cream. Ladle a little of the soup around each meringue, place 3-4 fresh cherries in the soup and sprinkle pistachios over the top. Serves 6.

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