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Whipped Blue Cheese and Poached Pear Toasts

Yield: 8 appetizer servings

Time: 30 minutes

For the whipped blue cheese:

6 oz. blue cheese

4 oz. cream cheese (or Neufchâtel)

$\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. red wine vinegar

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. salt

1 cup whipped cream

For the poached pears:

8 cups water

$2\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar

6 cinnamon sticks

5 strips of fresh ginger (remove the outer skin from the ginger root, then create strips using a vegetable peeler)

4 Bosc pears (Bartlett or Anjou work too!)

Other:

1 baguette or loaf of other French bread

freshly cracked pepper

4 tbsp. honey



1. Thinly slice the baguette and lightly toast until golden brown (about 5-8 minutes at 375°F).
2. To poach the pears, combine the water, sugar, cinnamon and ginger in a small saucepan. Simmer over medium heat until gently boiling. Keeping the stems of the pears intact, peel off the outer skin. Submerge the pears into the boiling poaching liquid and continue to simmer over medium heat until the pears are softened, about 10 minutes. Remove the pears from the liquid and allow to cool to room temperature. Slice into quarters, remove the core, and thinly slice each quarter into about 5 slices.
3. In the meantime, mash together the blue cheese, cream cheese, vinegar and salt. Gently fold in the whipped cream and mix until well blended.
4. Spread 1 tbsp. of the cheese mixture over each toasted baguette slice. Place two slices of poached pear on top of the cheese mixture. Lightly drizzle with honey and garnish with fresh cracked pepper.

Note: The poaching liquid can be kept refrigerated for up to one week to poach additional pears and/or to be used as a pear-cinnamon-ginger simple syrup for cocktails.

This recipe was inspired by Far Niente's recipe, which is available at: http://www.dolcewine.com/recipes/blue-cheese-mousse-with-vanilla-poached-pear-canape/?utm_source=Winery+Customers&utm_campaign=f52bc20046-DEC%2BDFNS%2BRecipe%2B2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_42c452f99d-f52bc20046-229092593