PEAR FANS

An elegant way of serving poached pears for dessert. Peel pears and cut into halves lengthwise. Using a melon bailer or a teaspoon, scoop out the seeds. Make a syrup of 2 cups water or 1 cup water and 1 cup white wine and 1/2 cup sugar. Drop pears into the syrup.

If cooking many pears, poach in 2 or 3 batches. Return the syrup to a boil; reduce heat and poach pears gently until tender. Ripe fruit needs only 8 minutes, while under ripe fruit will take longer. Test with a skewer. Allow pears to cool in the syrup.

Cut each pear half into about 10 slices, leaving the top of the pear uncut. Place on individual serving dishes and gently press with fingers so the pear naturally fans out. The syrup may be boiled until reduced, then cooled and a little spooned over each pear.