Pear, Cranberry and Gingersnap Crumble

Crumble:
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup granulated sugar
3 tablespoons packed dark or light brown sugar
1 cup gingersnap crumbs (4 ounces or about 16 cookies)
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
1/8 teaspoon table salt
Pinch of white pepper, if your gingersnaps aren’t “snappish”
1/2 cup (4 ounces or 1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled

Filling:
2 pounds (about 4 to 5) large ripe pears, peeled, halved, cored and sliced 1/4 inch thick
1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) fresh cranberries
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Stir together flour, granulated sugar, brown sugar, gingersnap crumbs, ginger and salt. Stir in the melted butter until large crumbs form.

In a 1-1/2 to 2 quart baking dish, mix the pears, cranberries, lemon juice, lemon zest and vanilla. In a small bowl, whisk the sugar and cornstarch together then toss it with the fruit mixture in the pan.

Sprinkle the gingersnap crumble over the fruit. Set the crumble on a foil-lined baking sheet and bake it for about 45 minutes, until the crumble is a shade darker and you see juices bubbling through the crumbs. See how long you can wait before digging in.

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Adapted from Sweet Melissa Patisserie
Vanilla Roasted Pears

1/4 cup sugar
1/2 vanilla bean
1-1/2 pounds slightly-under-ripe, fragrant, medium pears, peeled if desired, halved through the stem and cored
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoon unsalted butter

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place sugar in a small bowl. With a thin, sharp knife, split vanilla bean lengthwise in half and scrape out the seeds. Stir the seeds into the sugar.

Arrange pears in a large baking dish, cut-side up. Drizzle lemon juice evenly over the fruit, then sprinkle with sugar. Nestle vanilla pod among the fruit (slit halves lengthwise into quarters). Pour water into the dish. Dot each pear with some butter.

Roast pears 30 minutes brushing occasionally with the pan juices. Turn the pears over and continue roasting, basting once or twice, until tender and caramelized, 25-30 minutes longer (if pears are small, test for doneness after 35-40 minutes of cooking; a paring knife poked into the thickest part of one should meet with no resistance).

Serve warm, spooned with the caramelized pear drippings from the pan over ice cream, dolloped with crème fraîche. Serves 4 or so

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Adapted from Sally Schneider at The Atlantic