

無花果の甘露煮 *Ichijuku no Kanro Ni* Figs Poached in Sugar Syrup



The Japanese poach a variety of fruits and nuts in sugar syrup. Collectively these dishes are called *kanro ni*. Written with calligraphy for sweet and dew, these dishes are sometimes spiced or spiked with addition flavors. For figs (*ichijuku*) lemon juice is added to brighten the color and make the dish less cloying. I sometimes add ginger juice (extracted from grated fresh ginger) and/or a drop of soy sauce – both add complexity and depth of flavor.

I like to serve poached figs with vanilla ice cream and or yoghurt. They also pair well with a platter of sharp cheeses... or become an accompaniment to roast chicken or pork.



This recipe can be made with any variety of fig. The most frequently encountered varietal in Japan is Dauphine (second from left, above), with a reddish-brown skin. Figs with deeply colored skins will produce a rosier colored poached fruit.

- 4-6 whole figs
- 8 T light brown sugar
- 1 and 1/2 cups water
- 1 and 1/2 T lemon juice
- Optional:
 - 1 - 2 teaspoons ginger juice (extracted from a large knob of grated fresh ginger)
 - 1/4 teaspoon soy sauce

Rinse and pat dry whole figs.

Combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan and set it over medium heat. Cook for one minute, stirring, to dissolve the sugar. Add the figs to the syrup and cover with parchment. Poach for 2 minutes. Add the lemon juice and poach for one more minute.

If you like, add ginger juice and drop of soy sauce to the poaching liquid.

Remove from the stove and let cool, covered with parchment. Poached figs will keep, covered in the refrigerator, for 5 days.