

Blancmange was a staple party dessert in the 1960's & 70's & has fallen out of fashion over the decades. Very similar to a Panna Cotta but with different thickening & setting agents.

While Panna Cotta uses only gelatine to set, Blancmange uses gelatine & cornflour.

For this recipe I have changed the gelatine & cornflour to Iota Carrageenan which is harvested from a seaweed in Carrigan head in Northern Ireland & comes in powdered form.

This makes the recipe suitable for vegetarians & still has the classic Blancmange texture.

I have included a strawberry jelly which is not vegetarian however this can be an optional garnish for anyone who would to add it.

We are using Black Pepper for this recipe but this can be substituted for pink peppercorns for a slightly sweeter & fragrant twist.

### **Vanilla Blancmange, Strawberries, Black Pepper & Basil**

#### For the Blancmange:

375g Milk

125g Double Cream

60g Caster Sugar

4g Iota Carrageenan

1 Vanilla Pod

#### For the Strawberry Consommé:

250g Strawberries

80g Caster Sugar

#### For the Black Pepper Tuille:

80g Plain Flour

80g Icing Sugar

80g Unsalted Butter

80g Egg Whites

Pinch of Cracked Black Pepper

#### For the Strawberry Jelly:

100g Strawberry Consommé

1 sheet gelatine

For the Strawberry Gel:

200g Strawberry Consommé

2g Agar Agar

For the Basil Sorbet

50g Basil

500g Water

375g Caster Sugar

35g Glucose

Cocoa Nibs

For this recipe you will need moulds to set your Blancmange in. You can use dariole moulds, silicon moulds or even glasses to set the Blancmange in.

Dariole moulds can be heated by dipping them in warm water to release the mixture then tipped onto the plate.

Silicon moulds may have to be frozen in order to take Blancmange out then defrosted in the fridge.

To make the Basil Sorbet, place the water, sugar & glucose in a pot & bring to a simmer until the glucose & sugar has dissolved. Put in the fridge until chilled.

Put chilled liquid in a liquidiser with the leaves of the basil & blend until smooth.

Pour the liquid through a fine sieve & churn in an ice cream machine until ready & transfer to the freezer.

If you don't have an ice cream machine put the sorbet liquid in a container in the freezer & mix every half hour until frozen.

To Make the strawberry Consommé, slice the strawberries thinly & put into a mixing bowl with sugar. Cover the bowl tightly with cling film & place over a pot of simmering water.

Leave this to cook for 1 to 2 hours.

The strawberries will lose all their colour as it cooks & the sugar will dissolve into the liquid that is extracted from the strawberries.

When it has cooked pour the clear liquid through a fine sieve & reserve.

To make the strawberry jelly, take 100g of the consommé & put it into a small pot.

Dissolve the gelatine sheet in a small amount of cold water until it has gone soft. Squeeze any excess water from the gelatine & add it to the consommé.

Bring the consommé & gelatine to a gentle heat until the gelatine has completely dissolved & pour into square container lined with cling film.

Place in the fridge to set.

Once it has set take the jelly out the container & cut the jelly into squares or use a cutter for your desired shape.

To make the strawberry gel, add the agar agar to the consommé & bring to boil.

Pour this mixture into a container & place in the fridge to set & harden.

Once it has set it will be very firm. Place into a liquidiser & blend until smooth or into small measuring jug & blend with a hand blender until smooth.

Put the gel into a piping bag or squeezey bottle.

To make the Blancmange, take 10g of the sugar & mix it with the carrageenan, put to side until ready. Split the Vanilla pod in half lengthways & scrape out the seeds, place both the pods & the seeds into a pot & add the milk, cream & 50g of the sugar.

Gently warm the milk while whisking continuously, when it starts to warm add the sugar & carrageenan mix & keep stirring.

The mixture will thicken as it heats then thin out again as it gets hotter.

Bring boil while whisking then pour through a sieve into a jug.

Carrageenan set very quickly & will start to set even when it is hot so have your moulds ready.

Pour the mixture into the moulds & chill in the fridge to set.

To make the pepper tuilles, mix all the ingredients in a mixer or with a hand mixer until it is a smooth paste.

Spread the mixture evenly on some parchment paper & bake at 180°C for 5 minutes until golden brown.

When cool break the biscuit into shards.

To serve:

Slice a strawberry finely & arranged nicely on the plate.

Place the blancmange on top of the sliced strawberries.

Pipe some of the gel onto plate & arrange some the jelly cubes around the Blancmange.

Stick the shard of biscuit into Blancmange & pour some of the consommé into a serving jug & serve on the side for your guest to pour themselves.