

# CHEERS

tops!



## MARINATED SPICED FRUIT SALAD

My darling Aunt Wilma Smit – a master embroiderer from Oudtshoorn – and her husband Johan recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a scrumptious lunch for extended family and friends. As part of the dessert buffet, they served legendary French chef Alain Senderens's recipe for a chilled fruit salad in a light syrup infused with cloves, vanilla, ginger, citrus, etc. It reminded me again how simplicity can be cleverly elevated. This is my version of the original recipe; use whatever seasonal fruit you have on hand and marinate it in the syrup for no longer than 3 hours to maintain the cut fruit's natural freshness.

**SERVES 6**

### INGREDIENTS

100 g (½ cup) white sugar  
500 ml (2 cups) water  
1 vanilla pod, sliced lengthways and seeds scraped out  
2 whole cloves  
1 whole star anise  
1 cinnamon stick  
peeled zest 1 lime  
peeled zest ½ lemon  
a few slices fresh ginger  
a few fresh mint leaves, plus extra, for serving  
± 8 cups sliced fruit of your choice (e.g. papaya, mango, watermelon, strawberries, nectarines, peaches, kiwi, litchi, grapes)

### METHOD

In a pot or saucepan over medium heat, add the sugar, water, scraped vanilla seeds and pod, whole cloves, star anise, cinnamon, lime and lemon zest, ginger and mint leaves. Bring to a simmer, stirring, then remove from the heat as soon as the sugar has dissolved. Leave to infuse until completely cool (this may be done a day or two ahead), then strain through a sieve, discarding the solids. Arrange the sliced fruit in a bowl, pour over the syrup, stir gently, and leave to marinate in the fridge for 2–3 hours before serving. Stir again before serving, then top with a few mint leaves and serve cold, with or without vanilla ice cream.