

NECTARINE SALSA

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS

Active time: 15 min Start to finish: 1½ hr

We like to serve this fresh salsa with grilled fish, chicken, or pork, or as a dip for tortilla chips.

- 3 ripe large nectarines (1 to 1½ lb total), pitted and chopped
- ½ cup chopped white onion
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh serrano chile, including seeds
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt

► Stir together all ingredients and let stand at room temperature, stirring

occasionally, 1 hour, to allow flavors to develop.

PLUM CARPACCIO

SERVES 6 (DESSERT)

Active time: 15 min Start to finish: 2½ hr

Simple but elegant, this dessert makes a refreshing finale to dinner on a hot summer evening.

- 1¼ lb firm-ripe black or red plums (about 4), halved lengthwise and pitted
- ⅔ cup sugar
- ⅔ cup water
- 1 (3-inch-long) fresh rosemary sprig
- 2 tablespoons slivovitz (plum brandy) or grappa

Special equipment: an adjustable-blade slicer

► Put slicer in a 13- by 9-inch shallow baking dish. Starting with cut side down, slice each plum into near-paper-thin rounds.

► Bring sugar, water, and rosemary to a boil in a small saucepan over moderately high heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in slivovitz, then pour hot syrup over plums. Let macerate at room temperature, gently stirring occasionally, until plums are translucent and softened, about 2 hours.

► Divide plums among 6 plates, overlapping slices slightly, then drizzle with some syrup.

Cooks' note:

Plums can macerate, covered and chilled, up to 1 day. ☀