

Tarte tatin



This classic French dessert can be tricky, but it's delicious when it works. You can substitute the apples for plenty of other fruit; pear and prune or quince work beautifully.

Ingredients

For the pastry

320g/11oz plain flour
225g/8oz ice-cold butter
110g/4oz icing sugar
3 free-range egg yolks

For the filling

6 Cox or 4 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and cut into 8-12 wedges
¼ lemon
110g/4oz caster sugar
110g/4oz butter

To serve

double cream or vanilla ice cream

Preparation method

- . Preheat the oven to 250C/500F/Gas 9.
- . First, make the pastry. In a food processor, mix the flour, butter and icing sugar just until they resemble breadcrumbs. Add the egg yolks and, using the pulse button, mix until it comes together in a dough.
- . Remove the dough from the mixer bowl and divide into two pieces. Wrap in clingfilm and put in the freezer to chill for at least an hour.
- . For the filling, place the apple wedges in a bowl, squeeze the lemon juice over them and toss them gently.
- . Sprinkle 85g/3oz of the sugar in a heavy-bottomed pan and place on the hob over a medium heat, turning the pan frequently and making sure the sugar doesn't burn. Allow the sugar to caramelize a little and become a pale golden brown, then remove from the heat and arrange the drained apple pieces in one layer over the bottom of the pan.
- . Place the pan in the oven and bake until the apples have softened a bit and started to release some liquid - about 10 minutes.
- . Remove from the oven and sprinkle over the remaining sugar and dot the butter on top. Remove the pastry from the freezer and, using the coarse side of a cheese grater, grate the pastry with long steady strokes over the apples until it forms an even layer at least 2.5cm/1 inch thick. Do not press down. Return to the oven, turn the heat down to 220C/425F/Gas 7 and bake until the pastry is golden brown - about 20 minutes. Remove from the oven and leave to rest for a minute or two.
- . Take a heatproof serving dish that is generously larger than the pan on all sides and place over the pan. Protecting your hands with a dry folded tea-towel, and holding the dish and pan firmly together, quickly and carefully flip the pan and the dish so that the pan is on top. Tap the pan sharply a few times all round with a wooden spoon, then lift off. The tart should be left on the serving dish with the apple on top.
- . Serve warm with double cream, crème fraîche or vanilla ice cream.