

Fig, cream cheese and mint tart

Ingredients

For the shortcrust pastry

- 250g/9oz plain flour
- 125g/4½oz cold butter, cubed
- 2 free-range egg yolks
- large pinch salt
- 1-4 tbsp water, if needed

For the tart

- plain flour, for dusting
- 260ml/9½fl oz whipping cream
- 165g/5½oz cream cheese
- 3 big squidges of honey
- 1 tbsp Marsala (optional)
- 12–16 figs, each cut into 6 pieces
- handful green shelled pistachios, walnuts or pecans, halved
- 1 bunch fresh mint, ripped or roughly torn

Preparation method

1. Put the flour and butter in a food processor and pulse to make breadcrumbs.
2. Alternatively use your hands and rub the butter and flour together in a bowl until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
3. Add the egg yolks and a pinch of salt, and stir together with a knife. Press the mixture together into a ball. If the pastry feels very dry, add a little water, but try to avoid adding water if you can.
4. Once the pastry is all pressed together, wrap in cling film and pop it in the fridge to rest for 30 minutes.
5. After 30 minutes, remove the pastry from the fridge and set it aside to warm up a little (if you use it straight from the fridge and try to roll it out, the pastry will just be a hopeless crumbly mess).
6. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.
7. Roll the pastry out on a floured work surface to the thickness of half a £1 coin and use it to carefully line a 20 x 30cm/8 x 12in rectangular fluted tin. Homemade pastry is often quite crumbly. Don't be alarmed by this, you can always patch it together in the tin.
8. Take a small ball of the pastry (the size of a £1 coin) and use it to gently ease the dough down into the tin. Press the handle of a wooden spoon against the pastry all round the edges to coax it into the fluted grooves. Trim off the excess around the top and run a thin knife around between the pastry and the edge of the tin to loosen. Put in the fridge for about 15 minutes, or until firm.



30 mins to 1 hour

preparation time

30 mins to 1 hour

cooking time

Serves 8-10

By Lorraine Pascale
From Baking Made Easy

This recipe is a real stunner and a snappy one to prepare. Serve with a simple rocket or spinach salad and a glass of a sweet wine such as Asti.

Equipment and preparation: You will need a 20 x 30cm/8 x 12in rectangular fluted tin.

Top recipe tip

If you don't have time to make your own pastry, you can use 500g/1lb 2oz shop-bought shortcrust instead. This tart is best eaten on the day it is made.

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- 9. Remove the tart from the fridge. Take a piece of baking paper slightly larger than the tin and scrunch it up, then unscrunch it and line the tin with it. Fill it with baking beans or dried beans and 'blind bake' in the oven for 20–25 minutes, or until the pastry feels sandy to the touch. Remove from the oven and set aside.**
 - 10.** Put the cream in a bowl and whip until beginning to thicken. Put the cream cheese into a separate bowl and fold the cream into the cream cheese. Mix with the honey and Marsala, if using. Put the filling in the tart case, then arrange the figs on top and scatter over the nuts and mint.