

Speculaas Asian Pear Tart

Makes: 1 large pie

Use homemade shortcrust pastry or if you don't have the patience, store-bought puff pastry works well too.

Ingredients:

- 300g flour
- 200g chilled butter (grated)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 egg yolk
- 4 Tbsp chilled water

Method: (By hand or food processor)

Preheat 220°C

1. Combine flour and salt in a mixing bowl.
2. Incorporate butter to dry ingredients to make bread crumbly texture.
3. Mix egg and water together in a separate bowl.
4. Add slowly to butter and flour, using a palette knife to mix the liquid in evenly.
*Don't work/knead the pastry or it'll shrink when baking.
5. Wrap in cling wrap and chill for 15 min.
6. Roll the pastry out from the centre out, lift gently onto a rolling pin to line it over pie tin.
7. Line the pie with baking paper and weights (large beans/rice/ceramic beans).
8. Reduce temperature to 200°C. Bake for 15 minutes
9. Take weights off and bake for a further 10 minutes.
10. Remove from oven, place on a rack to cool.

Blind Baking:

Steps 7–10: This is known as blind baking. Blind baking is also known as prebaking – to bake the pie crust before adding the filling. This prevents the base from getting soggy.

Filling ingredients:

- 4 Asian pears (peeled and cored)
- 1 C water
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 10 ml of lemon juice
- ¼ Tsp Speculaas spice
- ¼ cup brown sugar

Filling method:

- Slice 4 Asian pears into discs.
- Bring water to a simmer with cinnamon, lemon juice, speculaas and sugar.
- Cook the pears for 5 minutes on a light simmer.
- Remove the pears to cool.
- Reduce the liquid to form a syrup.
- Layer the pears in a circular fashion, overlapping until filled to the centre.
- Pour the syrup evenly over the fruit.
- Bake for 15 minutes at 180°C until the pear tips have caramelised.

Serve with:

Dust icing sugar, and enjoy with fresh whipped cream and vanilla.