

Lemon meringue tart

By Maggie Beer

45 minutes

50 minutes, plus 4 hours setting time

8

Serves



INGREDIENTS

Sour cream pastry

200g unsalted butter, chilled and diced
small
250g plain flour
125ml sour cream

Lemon filling

150g caster sugar
180g egg yolks (approximately 10
free-range eggs)
80ml lemon juice
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
300ml double cream
300ml thickened or single cream

Meringue topping

100g egg whites
200g caster sugar
10g cornflour

METHOD

Sour cream pastry

1. Place the butter and flour into the bowl of a food processor. Pulse to combine until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
2. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ of the sour cream and pulse to incorporate then add the remaining sour cream and continue pulsing until the dough just starts to combine.
3. Tip the pastry out onto a clean work bench and bring together by hand, forming it into a rough rectangle, approximately 2cm thick. Wrap in cling wrap and refrigerate for 10–20 minutes to rest.

Lemon tart

1. Pre-heat the oven on Intensive Bake at 160°C with a baking tray placed on shelf position 1.
2. Roll the sour cream pastry into a round sheet approximately 3mm thick then line a greased loose based flan tin (approximately 20cm x 5cm), allow the edge of the pastry to come above the tin by 5mm.
3. Dock the pastry evenly with a fork and place into the refrigerator to chill for 15 minutes.
4. Beat the sugar, yolks, lemon juice and grated zest until smooth and the sugar has dissolved.
5. Mix together the double and single cream then fold into the lemon mixture, leave to stand for 10 minutes to allow any large bubbles to settle.
6. Pour the lemon mixture into the pastry lined tin and place into the oven on the pre-heated tray.
7. Bake for 40 minutes, the custard filling should be partially set with a firm enough crust to hold the meringue.
8. To prepare the meringue topping: use an electric mixer to whisk the egg whites to soft peaks on medium speed, approximately 3-5 minutes. While mixing, gradually add the caster sugar and continue to whisk until a thick stable meringue has formed, then using a spatula fold in the cornflour.
9. Remove the tart from the oven and spoon on the meringue topping, starting around the edges working towards the middle.
10. Return to the oven and bake for a further 15-20 minutes until the meringue is evenly browned and custard is set with a slight wobble, the internal temperature should be between 80°C- 85°C if reading with a food thermometer.
11. Remove from the oven and cool to room temperature in the tin on a wire rack.
12. When set enough to handle, carefully remove the tart from the tin and return to the wire rack to cool completely, allowing 3-4 hours depending on the temperature in the room. The filling should be set and have the consistency of ripe brie.

To serve

1. Using a hot knife slice, into equal portions and serve with crème fraîche.

Notes

- “For freshness at the end of a meal, this tart, inspired by Sydney chef Tony Bilson’s recipe, never fails to delight. I bake it in a deep-sided quiche tin. This tart deserves a little practice to get the texture of the filling just right, as so many factors can influence the set. The first time you make it, start well in advance so that you can refrigerate the tart for an hour or so if the filling does not set. This is pretty delicious served with crème fraîche.” Maggie Beer.
- Depending on the temperature of the day the tart should set in 3-4 hours at room temperature, however, if you are baking in the height of summer it may be necessary to chill further in the refrigerator. Bake the tart well in advance, cool to room temperature then chill completely (at least 4 hours). When serving, remove the tart from the refrigerator at least 30 minutes beforehand, cutting and serving at room temperature.