

Plum Frangipane Tart

Serves 8:

Ingredients

Almond Crust:

1 1/4 cup all purpose flour
1/2 cup slivered blanched almonds
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup (1 stick) chilled unsalted butter, cut into bits
3/4 teaspoon almond extract
2 tablespoons (or more) ice water

Frangipane:

1 cup slivered blanched almonds
1/3 cup sugar
5 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 teaspoon dark rum
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel

5 large plums, halved

Glaze:

2 tablespoons apricot jam
2 teaspoons brandy or cognac
creme fraiche

Preparation

Special equipment: *9 inch fluted tart pan with removable bottom*

Pulse together flour, blanched almonds, sugar and salt in food processor, until nuts are finely ground. Cut a stick of butter into pieces and then stick it into the freezer for a few minutes to chill. Add cold butter bits to flour, and pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal. Mix in almond extract and ice water, a tablespoon at a time, until dough forms clumps when squeezed. You may need more or less water, depending on many factors, just be sure not to over process the dough.

Pour out flour mixture on a work surface.
Knead briefly to combine and then flatten dough into a disk.
Wrap in plastic and refrigerate at least 2 hours, or up to a day.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
On a lightly floured surface, roll out crust to a 13 inch round using a floured rolling pin.
Baking tip: keep turning the dough a quarter turn clockwise after each roll to help keep it round.
If any cracks appear, just squeeze them back together.
Roll dough around pin to facilitate placing it in tart pan.
Gently lay it over the pan and press down; cut off any excess and fill any gaps with the scraps.
Freeze for 15 minutes.

Place tart pan on a baking sheet and pierce bottom lightly with a fork.
Bake crust for 10 minutes, turn, then continue baking for 12 to 14 minutes until pale golden brown.
Cool on baking sheet for 15 minutes.

Make frangipane: in food processor, blend together almonds, sugar, butter, and egg.
Add in vanilla extract, almond extract, dark rum and grated lemon peel.
Spread frangipane filling in the slightly cooled crust.

Halve plums and remove their pits.
On a work surface, place each plum half cut side down.
Using sharp tip of a knife, cut into thin slices without cutting through end.
Press down gently to fan the slices out.
Continue until all plums are cut; place fanned out plum halves, skin side up, on top of the frangipane.
Press down gently to secure on top of filling.

Place tart on baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes.
Plums should be tender and frangipane should be puffed and golden.
Transfer to a rack to cool.
When cool, tart may be covered and reserved at room temperature for a day.

Make glaze: in a small saucepan, mix together apricot jam and brandy or cognac.
Bring just to a boil.
Pour mixture through a fine strainer into a small bowl.
Lightly brush glaze all over tart.
Serve wedges of tart with a dollop of creme fraiche, for a tangy creamy contrast.