

Frangipane Tart with Star Anise Poached Pears

Serves: 8-10

Preparation time: 25 minutes

Cooking time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Ingredients

Pastry:

250g cake wheat flour

30ml (2 tablespoons) icing sugar

¼ teaspoon fine salt

150g salted butter, cold

1 egg yolk

45 - 60ml ice water

Frangipane Filling:

175g salted butter, softened

175g castor sugar

3 extra-large eggs

175g almond flour

20ml (4 teaspoons) cake wheat flour

20ml hazelnut liqueur (optional) or 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract

Poaching Liquid:

250ml (1 cup) water

750ml (3 cups) white wine (Sauvignon Blanc)

110g (1/2 cup) soft brown sugar

1 vanilla pod, split and seeds scraped

3 star anise

Peel of 1 lemon

4 - 5 pears, firm but ripe, peeled

40g hazelnuts, roughly chopped

Icing sugar, for dusting

Method

For the pastry, place the flour, icing sugar and salt in a processor. Pulse to aerate. Add the butter and process until the texture is roughly crumbed. Whisk the egg yolk and 45ml water together, then add to the flour. Pulse to combine. Drizzle in the remaining water if the dough is slightly crumbly. Turn out and press together lightly. Wrap in cling film and chill for 1 hour.

For the frangipane, cream the butter and castor sugar together until pale. Add the eggs and mix to combine. Add the almond flour and cake wheat flour and whisk until creamy. Fold through the liqueur, if using, or vanilla extract.

For the poached pears, place all the poaching ingredients in a deep saucepan. Bring up to a simmer, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Lower the pears gently into the liquid and poach for 20-25 minutes, turning the pears several times to ensure even cooking. Remove from the heat and cool in the liquid.

On a floured board, roll the dough out to a 3mm thickness. Line the Le Creuset Bakeware Square Fluted Tart Tin on the base and sides. Prick the pastry base with a fork and chill until firm.

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Spread the frangipane evenly over the pastry case. Halve and core the pears. Slice thinly, then arrange over the frangipane. Scatter the hazelnuts around the sides. Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce the temperature to 180°C and bake for a further 45-50 minutes. Cover with foil for the last 10 minutes if browning too rapidly.

Cook's Note: Reserved poaching liquid can be reduced until syrupy and thick. Serve alongside the tart with softly whipped cream.