

FROM EPISODE 205: EASY FRENCH DESSERTS



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The ricotta cheese in this tart—inspired by one in Rose Carrarini's book, "Breakfast, Lunch, Tea"—creates a deliciously creamy yet surprisingly light filling that highlights the orange and chocolate that flavor it. The crust, made partly with almond flour, has a sandy crispness that contrasts well with the filling. For do-ahead ease, the tart shell can be prepped, fitted in the pan, pricked all over, then frozen for up to two weeks; do not thaw before baking.

Don't use skim-milk ricotta; whole-milk is needed for its richness and creamy consistency. Note that some ricottas will brown more than others, though still will taste fine. Those brands contain more lactose, which reacts with the proteins at high temperatures, causing browning. We liked Calabro, which is low in lactose. Also, don't chop the chocolate too finely; tiny bits will melt into the filling rather than retain their shape. Aim for ¼-inch pieces.

Chocolate Orange Tart

Start to finish: 2 hours (45 minutes active), plus cooling | Servings: 8

INGREDIENTS

For the tart shell:

130 grams (1 cup) all-purpose flour
 50 grams (½ cup) almond flour
 66 grams (½ cup) white sugar
 ½ teaspoon kosher salt
 6 tablespoons salted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes and chilled
 1 large egg yolk
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the filling:

74 grams (6 tablespoons) white sugar
 2 teaspoons grated orange zest plus 2 tablespoons orange juice (1 orange)
 ½ teaspoon kosher salt
 ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
 1½ cups (12 ounces) whole-milk ricotta
 1 large egg plus 1 large egg yolk
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1½ ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the oven to 300°F with a rack in the middle position. Mist a 9-inch tart pan with removable bottom with cooking spray and set on a baking sheet.

In a food processor, combine both flours, the sugar and salt; process until combined, about 5 seconds. Scatter the butter over the dry ingredients and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse sand, 10 to 12 times. Add the yolk and vanilla, then process until the mixture is evenly moistened and cohesive, 20 to 30 seconds; the mixture may not form a single mass.

Crumble the dough into the tart pan, evenly covering the surface. Using a dry measuring cup, press the dough into an even layer over the bottom and up the sides of the pan. Use a fork to prick all over the bottom and sides, then freeze until firm, at least 15 minutes or up to 1 hour. Bake on the baking sheet until deep golden brown, 1 to 1¼ hours. Let cool on the baking sheet on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Increase the oven to 350°F.

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Chocolate Orange Tart

Continued

INSTRUCTIONS

Meanwhile, prepare the filling. In the empty food processor, combine the sugar, orange zest, salt and cinnamon; process until the sugar is moistened and fragrant, about 15 seconds. Add the ricotta and process until smooth, about 30 seconds, scraping the bowl as needed. Add the egg, egg yolk, orange juice and vanilla, then process until combined, another 10 to 15 seconds. Set aside.

Pour the filling into the cooled, but still warm crust, then sprinkle evenly with the chocolate. Carefully slide the baking sheet into the oven and bake until the filling is slightly puffed at the edges but the center still jiggles lightly, 25 to 35 minutes. Let cool completely on a rack, about 2 hours.

Remove the outer ring from the tart pan. Serve at room temperature or chilled. If chilling, keep outer ring in place and chill 1 hour, or until the chocolate is set before loosely covering with plastic wrap. Tart can be refrigerated up to 2 days ahead.