

Bakewell Tart

<http://userealbutter.com/2009/06/27/bakewell-tart-recipe/>
a traditional (UK) recipe from the 1800s in England

1 sweet shortcrust pastry
bench flour
1 cup (250ml) jam or curd, warmed for spreadability
1 batch frangipane
handful almond slivers, blanched

sweet shortcrust pastry

8 oz. (225g) all purpose flour
1 oz. (30g) sugar
1/2 tsp (2.5ml) salt
4 oz. (110g) unsalted butter, cold (frozen is better)
2 egg yolks
1/2 tsp (2.5ml) almond extract (optional)
1-2 tbsps (15-30ml) cold water

Sift together flour, sugar and salt. Grate butter into the flour mixture, using the large hole-side of a box grater. Using your finger tips only, and working very quickly, rub the fat into the flour until the mixture resembles bread crumbs. Set aside. Lightly beat the egg yolks with the almond extract (if using) and quickly mix into the flour mixture. Keep mixing while dribbling in the water, only adding enough to form a cohesive and slightly sticky dough. Form the dough into a disc, wrap in cling and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

frangipane

4.5 oz. (125g) unsalted butter, softened
4.5 oz. (125g) icing sugar
3 eggs
1/2 tsp (2.5ml) almond extract
4.5 oz. (125g) ground almonds
1 oz. (30g) all purpose flour

Cream butter and sugar together for about a minute or until the mixture is primrose in color and very fluffy. Scrape down the side of the bowl and add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. The batter may appear to curdle. In the words of Douglas Adams: Don't panic. Really. It'll be fine. After all three are in, pour in the almond extract and mix for about another 30 seconds and scrape down the sides again. With the beaters on, spoon in the ground nuts and the flour. Mix well. The mixture will be soft, keep its slightly curdled look (mostly from the almonds) and retain its pallid yellow color.

Assemble the tart: Place the chilled dough disc on a lightly floured surface. If it's overly cold, you will need to let it become acclimatised for about 15 minutes before you roll it

out. Flour the rolling pin and roll the pastry to 5mm (1/4") thickness, by rolling in one direction only (start from the centre and roll away from you), and turning the disc a quarter turn after each roll. When the pastry is to the desired size and thickness, transfer it to the tart pan, press in and trim the excess dough. Patch any holes, fissures or tears with trimmed bits. Chill in the freezer for 15 minutes. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Remove shell from freezer, spread as even a layer as you can of jam onto the pastry base. Top with frangipane, spreading to cover the entire surface of the tart. Smooth the top and pop into the oven for 30 minutes. Five minutes before the tart is done, the top will be poofy and brownish. Remove from oven and strew flaked almonds on top and return to the heat for the last five minutes of baking. The finished tart will have a golden crust and the frangipane will be tanned, poofy and a bit spongy-looking. Remove from the oven and cool on the counter. Serve warm, with crème fraîche, whipped cream or custard sauce if you wish. When you slice into the tart, the almond paste will be firm, but slightly squidgy and the crust should be crisp but not tough. Makes one 9-inch tart.