

Chinese Egg Custard Tarts

<http://userealbutter.com/2014/01/19/chinese-egg-custard-tarts-recipe/>

based on two recipes from Chinese Snacks and from Chinese Dim Sum by Wei-Chuan Publishing

water dough

2 cups all-purpose flour
5 tbsps shortening or lard
10 tbsps (5 oz.) water
1/4 tsp salt

fat dough

1 cup all-purpose flour
5 tbsps shortening or lard

filling

5 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 1/8 cup hot water
2 tbsps evaporated milk
1/4 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract

Prepare the water dough: Mix all of the water dough ingredients in a bowl. Knead until smooth (took me a few minutes). Let stand 20 minutes covered with a damp paper towel. Roll the dough into one or two logs and cut into 20 equal pieces. Cover with a damp paper towel.

Prepare the fat dough: Mix the flour and fat together until smooth. This dough will be crumbly compared to the water dough. Divide into 20 equal pieces and roll each piece into a ball.

Make the pastry dough: Take one piece of the water dough and flatten it into a circle with your palm. Roll the dough into a small disk about 3-inches in diameter. Place one ball of the fat dough in the center of the disk and wrap the ball completely with the water dough to make a ball. Place the gathers on the bottom and press the ball with your palm to flatten. Use a rolling pin to roll the dough into an oblong rectangular shape (it won't be a rectangle, it's okay) about 4 or 5 inches long. Roll the dough up like a carpet from one end. Turn the dough 90 degrees. Flatten the dough with your palm and roll it out into another rectangle about 4 or 5 inches long. Roll the dough up like a carpet again from one end. You should now have a somewhat squat package of dough. Flatten it once more, but this time roll it out evenly into a circle or square at least 3-inches in diameter. I used a 3-inch circular cutter to trim off the odd ends – you don't have to do this. Once trimmed, I rolled the disk out a little more. You just want to be sure you have enough surface area to cover your tart or muffin molds. Line a mold with the pastry dough and crimp the edges. Repeat for the remaining dough.

Make the tarts: Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat the 5 eggs in a medium bowl. In another medium bowl, stir the sugar, hot water, evaporated milk, salt, and vanilla extract together until the sugar is dissolved. Whisk the sugar water into the eggs until incorporated. Arrange the pastry-lined tart molds on a foil-lined baking sheet (to catch the leaks and overspill). Strain the egg mixture through a sieve into each of the tarts, taking care not to overfill (the custard will puff up when it bakes). Bake the tarts 25-35 minutes until the custard is no longer liquid (check with a toothpick – mine took 35 minutes). Remove from oven and serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 20 2.5-inch tarts.