

March 18, 2012

Sprinkle half of the cheese evenly over the partially baked pastry shell. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs until blended. Whisk in the half-and-half, nutmeg and salt. Stir in the bacon and the remaining cheese. Pour the egg mixture into the pastry shell.

Bake until the filling is set and slightly puffed and the crust is golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack and let cool briefly. Cut the quiche into wedges and serve warm. Makes one 9-inch quiche.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Food Made Fast Series, *Baking*, by Lou Seibert Pappas (Oxmoor House, 2006).

Fresh Fruit Tart

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough disk into an 11-inch round. Transfer to a 9-inch tart pan with a removable bottom and press it gently onto the bottom and sides of the pan, forming an even layer. Place in the freezer for 30 minutes.

Preheat an oven to 375°F.

Line the pastry shell with parchment paper and fill with pie weights, rice or beans. Bake until lightly golden around the edges, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from the oven and remove the weights and parchment. Continue to bake until pale gold, 5 to 7 minutes more. Let cool on a rack.

To prepare the pastry cream, pour the milk into a saucepan over medium heat and heat until small bubbles appear along the edges of the pan. Remove from the heat. In another saucepan, stir together the flour and sugar. In a bowl, whisk the egg yolks until light colored. Whisk the hot milk into the flour mixture and place over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture boils, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and whisk one-fourth of the hot milk–flour mixture into the egg yolks. Then whisk the egg yolks into the remaining hot milk–flour mixture and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thickened slightly and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the liquid registers 165°F, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat, stir in the butter and strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean bowl. Stir in the kirsch and cover with plastic wrap, pressing it directly onto the surface of the pastry cream. Let cool in the refrigerator.

Spread the cooled pastry cream in the pastry shell. Arrange the fruits attractively on top of the pastry cream and brush the fruit with a thin coating of the jelly. Remove the pan sides and, using a spatula, slide the tart from the pan bottom onto a serving plate. Makes one 9-inch tart; serves 8.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Seasonal Celebration Series, *Summer*, by Joanne Weir (Time-Life Books, 1997).

Ingredients for Fresh Fruit Tart

1 flaky pie pastry disk or rich tart pastry disk, at cool room temperature

1¼ cups milk

3½ Tbs. all-purpose flour

¼ cup sugar

4 egg yolks

1 Tbs. unsalted butter

2 tsp. kirsch or ½ tsp. vanilla extract

4 cups sliced mixed fruits, such as kiwifruits, peaches, plums and whole blueberries

¼ cup red currant jelly or apricot jelly, melted

Ingredients for Flaky Pie Pastry

1⅓ cups all-purpose flour

1 Tbs. sugar (optional)

¼ tsp salt

5 Tbs. cold unsalted butter, cut into ¾-inch pieces

3 Tbs. cold vegetable shortening, cut into ¾-inch pieces

4 Tbs. ice water

Ingredients for Rich Tart Pastry

1¼ cups all-purpose flour

½ cup confectioners' sugar

¼ tsp. salt

8 Tbs. (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into ¾-inch pieces

2 egg yolks

1 Tbs. heavy cream

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Technique Class: Sweet & Savory Tarts

Tarts, with their buttery crusts and fluted edges, have long been a favorite in European kitchens. Without a top crust to hide their fillings, they make an elegant impression with spirals of thinly sliced fruits, specks of rosy bacon or colorful vegetables. Serve a narrow slice or an individual tartlet for a stylish start or finish to any occasion.

Flaky Pie Pastry

The rich flavor of butter and the flake-making quality of vegetable shortening produce a pie pastry that is both versatile and delicious. The butter and shortening should be very cold so that they will form layers in the crust that contribute to the overall flakiness. If you are making a savory pie, omit the sugar.

In a bowl of a food processor, combine the flour, sugar and salt and pulse 2 or 3 times to mix. Add the butter and shortening pieces and pulse 8 to 10 times until the mixture forms large, coarse crumbs. Add the ice water a little at a time and pulse 10 to 12 times until the dough begins to come together in a mass but does not form a ball.

Transfer the dough to a work surface and shape into a 6-inch disk. Wrap the disk with plastic wrap and refrigerate until well chilled, at least 1 hour or up to overnight. Makes pastry for one 9-inch pie.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Essentials of Baking*, by Cathy Burgett, Elinor Klivans and Lou Seibert Pappas (Oxmoor House, 2008).

Rich Tart Pastry

Butter-rich tart pastry, also known as pâte sucrée, results in a tender texture, rather than the flaky character of a successful piecrust. The dough is similar to a smooth cookie dough, and once baked, it is reminiscent of a good butter cookie. While the pastry is tender, it is also strong enough to support a baked tart outside of the pan.

In the bowl of a food processor, combine the flour, confectioners' sugar and salt and pulse 1 or 2 times to mix. Add the butter pieces and pulse 7 or 8 times until the mixture forms large, coarse crumbs the size of large peas.

In a small bowl, lightly beat the egg yolks with a fork, then stir in the cream until blended. With the motor running, add the egg mixture and process just until the dough begins to come together but does not form a ball.

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Transfer the dough to a work surface and shape into a 6-inch disk. Wrap the disk with plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm, at least 45 minutes or up to overnight. Makes pastry for one 9½-inch tart.

Variations:

Citrus Tart Pastry: Add 1 tsp. grated lemon, lime or orange zest with the egg mixture.

Vanilla Tart Pastry: Add 1 tsp. vanilla extract with the egg mixture.

Almond Tart Pastry: Add 1 tsp. almond extract with the egg mixture.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Essentials of Baking*, by Cathy Burgett, Elinor Klivans and Lou Seibert Pappas (Oxmoor House, 2008).

Cookie Crumb Crust

Quick and easy to assemble, with no rolling required, this crust forms the base for simple pies, such as chocolate pudding pie and Mississippi mud pie.

Preheat an oven to 350°F.

In a bowl, combine the cookie crumbs, butter and sugar and stir until the crumbs are well moistened. Pat the mixture firmly and evenly into the bottom and all the way up the sides of a 9-inch pie pan or dish.

Bake until the crust is firm, about 5 minutes. For a firmer, crunchier crust, bake for 5 minutes more. Makes one 9-inch crust.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Collection Series, *Pie & Tart*, by Carolyn Beth Weil (Simon & Schuster, 2003).

Savory Tart Dough

In a bowl, whisk together the flour, salt and sugar. Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in the butter until pea-size crumbs form. Add the water 1 Tbs. at a time and mix with your hands, adding more water as needed until the dough comes together. It should be moist but not sticky.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface, divide into 2 balls and shape each into a 5-inch disk. Wrap the disks separately with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out each dough disk into a 12-inch round about ⅛ inch thick. Using a small knife, trim the uneven edges. Transfer each round to a parchment-lined baking sheet and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Use as directed in your tart recipe. Makes pastry for two 10-inch tarts.

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Onion Tarts with Mixed Greens

Also known as galettes, these savory rustic tarts are topped with a simple salad. They make an impressive first course for a dinner party, or a light entrée for brunch or supper.

Place the dough rounds on separate parchment-lined baking sheets and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Position a rack in the lower third of an oven and preheat to 400°F.

In a sauté pan over medium-high heat, warm 3 Tbs. of the olive oil. Add the onions, salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until caramelized, 15 to 20 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more. Add the thyme, parsley and 2 tsp. of the vinegar and cook, stirring occasionally, until most of the liquid has evaporated, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature.

Spread half of the onion mixture on each dough round, leaving a 1-inch border. Fold the dough up and pinch together at 2-inch intervals. Lightly brush the top of the dough with the beaten egg. Bake the tarts until the crusts are golden, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer the baking sheets to wire racks and let the tarts cool for 10 minutes.

In a bowl, whisk together the remaining 2 tsp. vinegar, the remaining 2 Tbs. olive oil, salt and pepper to form a vinaigrette. Toss half of the vinaigrette with the salad greens, then place the remaining vinaigrette in an oil mister. Top the tarts with the salad, dividing evenly, and sprinkle with the cheese. Mist the salads with the remaining vinaigrette. Serve immediately. Serves 8.

Williams-Sonoma Kitchen

Classic Quiche

You can substitute various vegetables for the bacon in the quiche filling, such as cooked small broccoli florets, sautéed sliced leeks or chopped cooked spinach. Use about 1½ cups vegetables.

Preheat an oven to 425°F.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough disk into a 12-inch round. Fold the dough round in half and transfer to a 9-inch pie dish. Unfold the round and ease it into the dish, patting it firmly into the bottom and up the sides. Trim the edges to form a 1-inch overhang. Fold the overhang under itself and pinch to create a high edge on the rim of the dish. Using a fork, prick the bottom of the dough a few times. Freeze for 5 minutes.

Bake the pastry shell until lightly golden, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack and let cool. Reduce the oven temperature to 375°F.

In a saucepan over medium heat, fry the bacon until crisp, about 5 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain.

Ingredients for Onion Tarts with Mixed Greens

2 rolled-out rounds of savory tart dough, each 12 inches in diameter

5 Tbs. olive oil

4 yellow onions, thinly sliced

Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

3 garlic cloves, minced

2 tsp. minced fresh thyme

2 Tbs. minced fresh flat-leaf parsley

4 tsp. balsamic vinegar

1 egg, lightly beaten

4 oz. mixed salad greens

2 oz. goat cheese, crumbled

Ingredients for Classic Quiche

1 flaky pastry dough disk, at cool room temperature

8 bacon slices, chopped

1½ cups shredded Gruyère or Swiss cheese

4 eggs

1¼ cups half-and-half or milk

¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

½ tsp. salt

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