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APRICOT TART

This fruit tart makes a great dessert for several reasons, it is very easy to prepare and, it is delicious without being too sweet or heavy. Slicing all the fruit and arranging it can be a little labor-intensive but in this version, you only have to coarsely chop the apricot.

The pastry can be made by hand or in a food processor but pastry needs to rest for at least an hour in the refrigerator before being used, or it can be made a day in advance. The apricot filling only takes about 10 - 12 minutes to prepare but it does need to cool before being added to the pastry. I spread a coating of mascarpone cheese over the pastry before adding the apricot filling then sprinkled some pistachio nuts over the top.

This tart is best baked on a flat baking sheet, however, if baking on a rimmed baking sheet choose a slightly larger pan

that will allow room to handle the dough.

For the pastry

1 ½ cup all-purpose flour
1 stick of unsalted butter, very cold, cut into small cubes
Pinch of Kosher salt
1 tsp granulated sugar
4 tbsp ice-cold water

For the filling

1 ½ cups dried apricots (I used the Blenheim variety)
Water (enough to cover the apricots in the pan)
½ cup granulated sugar
3 tbsp Mascarpone cheese
½ cup chopped pistachio nuts

Preparation

Mix the flour with the salt and sugar, add the cold cubed butter, and mix by hand or in the food processor to form a coarse meal. Add the ice-cold water and mix until the mixture comes together in a ball. Handling the pastry with a light touch is key for flaky dough.

Roll the pastry with a light dusting of flour into a compact disc, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for an hour or overnight.

While the pastry is resting prepare the filling. Place the apricots in a medium-sized saucepan with just enough water to cover. Bring to a gentle boil and simmer for approximately 10 - 12 minutes to soften the apricots.



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Remove the pan from the heat and set aside ¼ cup of the liquid. Drain the apricots, chop them coarsely if needed and set them aside to cool. Return the reserved ¼ cup of liquid to the pan, add ½ cup of granulated sugar to the pan and cook over moderate heat until the sugar has dissolved. Combine the sugar syrup with the apricots and cool completely.

To bake the tart, heat the oven in the Convection Bake Mode at 375 degrees. Roll the dough out to an 11 - 12" circle on a pastry mat lightly dusted with flour then carefully transfer the pastry to a flat baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Gently spread the Mascarpone cheese over the dough with a palette knife leaving a 2" border around the edges. Sprinkle a little sugar over the cheese then carefully spread the cooled apricot mixture over the cheese and top with the pistachio nuts. Fold the edges of the dough in towards the center making neat pleats as you go. Bake for 20 - 25 minutes until the crust is golden and the bottom of the crust is baked through.

The edges of the crust can be brushed with a little warmed honey when the tart has cooled slightly for a glossy finish.

Serves 8

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