

Dolcelatte, pear and walnut tarts

Ingredients

For the pastry

- 300g/10½oz plain flour, plus extra for rolling
- 175g/6oz butter
- 1 free-range egg, beaten

For the filling

- knob of butter
- 1 tsp olive oil

- 3 medium conference pears, peeled, quartered, core removed, thickly sliced lengthways
- 3 free-range eggs, beaten
- 300ml/½ pint crème fraîche
- 3 fresh sage leaves, finely shredded
- 150g/5½oz Stilton, rind removed, broken into small pieces
- 40g/1½oz walnuts, broken into small pieces



Method

1. For the pastry, blend the flour and butter in a food processor until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the egg and pulse until the mixture just comes together as a dough.
2. Divide the pastry into eight portions and shape into balls. Flatten a pastry ball slightly and roll out on a lightly floured surface to a 3mm/½in thickness. Use the pastry to line a loose-bottomed individual tart tin. Trim any excess pastry and prick the base with a fork. Repeat with the remaining pastry balls and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6.
4. Line each tart case with greaseproof paper and baking beans and bake in the oven for 20 minutes. Remove the paper and beans and return to the oven for a further 10 minutes, or until the pastry is pale golden-brown.
5. Remove the tart cases reduce the oven to 170°C/325°F/Gas 3.
6. Melt the butter and oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Fry the pear slices for 1-2 minutes on each side, or until lightly browned on both sides. Remove from the pan and set aside to drain on kitchen paper.
7. Beat the eggs in a bowl until smooth, then stir in the crème fraîche and sage. Season with a good pinch of salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper.
8. Divide the Stilton amongst the tartlet cases. Add the pear slices and scatter with the walnut pieces. Slowly pour over the egg mixture, topping up each tart case when the liquid has had a chance to settle.
9. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until the filling is just set. Remove the tarts from the oven and set for 15 minutes before carefully removing from the tart tins.

Notes

To make this tart you will need eight loose-bottomed individual tart tins. Choose ones that are nice and deep if you can as they will hold more of the filling. These tarts make a great light lunch or a filling starter.