Pear and Chocolate Tart

Kate Hill, thefrenchkitchen.com, author
From a cooking class.



Luscious - the combination of pear and chocolate is sublime

PASTRY:

1 cup flour

1 tablespoon sugar

8 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 whole egg

1 tablespoon ice water

CHOCOLATE:

8 ounces dark chocolate, Valrhona or Sharffen Berger

PEARS:

4 large fresh pears, peeled and halved

2 tablespoons Poire William, or pear brandy

CREAM LAYER:

1 cup creme fraiche

1 whole egg

1/2 teaspoon vanilla

1 tablespoon vanilla sugar

Serving Ideas: This doesn't really NEED anything else to serve with it, but I've served it with homemade pear ice cream, in a small scoop beside the slice of tart. Or, vanilla ice cream would be good too.

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:
http://tastingspoons.com

Servings: 8

1. Pastry: mix flour and sugar together and work in the butter in your fingers, until the butter is flaked and broken into the flour. Don't overhandle the dough. If it's a warm day, dip your hands in some icy water periodically, as the heat from your hands can begin to melt the butter.
2. Make a well in the center of the flour, then add egg and water. Mix with fork until most of the flour is absorbed. Knead lightly with your hand to form a smooth ball. This dough should be very "wet" and soft. Don't be tempted to add more flour because it's too sticky. It needs to be just barely manageable. Cover with a cloth and rest while you prepare the filling. Preheat oven to 425°.
3. Pear Filling: Slice the pears into a bowl to which you add the 2 T. of Poire William. Gently roll the pears in the liquid to keep them from discoloring.
4. Chocolate: Melt the chocolate over very low heat, or a double boiler with 3 T. of pear syrup (from the bowl of pears) or water.
5. Roll out the pastry to a rough rectangle. Try to make this fit onto a large baking sheet, approximately 11 x 14 inches, fitted with a Silpat or parchment paper. It is not necessary to have even edges and do not trim the edges. Try not to have any thin spots - if you do, cut from a fuller area and patch. Dough is very soft and will allow you to do this easily.
6. Spread the chocolate mixture onto the pastry, leaving about 1 1/2 to 2 inches of pastry all around the edge (this is the edge that gets folded inward). Spread as evenly as possible.
7. In a small bowl stir the creme fraiche, egg, vanilla and Poire William juice that is poured off from the pears. You may need to add another 2-3 tsp. of Poire William to make the mixture thickly pourable.
8. Place the pear slices on top of the chocolate in a decorative manner. Spoon a little bit of the cream mixture around the outer edges of the pears, but not so much that it dribbles out onto the outer dough. Carefully fold the pastry edge up over the chocolate pear mixture. Don't pull the dough - you do not want the dough to break anywhere or the filling will ooze out in the baking. The edges do not meet - in fact you need to leave space because the creamy mixture goes on top of this.
9. Gently pour or spoon the creme fraiche mixture into the center area - not on the pastry. If necessary, carefully lift up the edges of the pastry a little bit, to spoon into crevices. Try to cover most or all of the chocolate. Sprinkle with (vanilla) sugar and bake in the top half of your oven for 20-25 minutes, or until pastry is golden brown.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 466 Calories; 30g Fat (56.7% calories from fat); 6g Protein; 46g Carbohydrate; 4g Dietary Fiber; 111mg Cholesterol; 36mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 Grain(Starch); 0 Lean Meat; 1 Fruit; 0 Non-Fat Milk; 6 Fat; 1 1/2 Other Carbohydrates.