

THOUGHTS FROM THE KITCHEN

Tarte Amandine

In the run-up to Christmas this is my favourite ‘bring-along’ gift when visiting a friend or when entertaining in my own home. It is really very special. The great advantage of this Tarte is that it freezes so well. This is

useful because when visiting friends, they will probably have enough food prepared themselves and so, you can suggest they freeze it for a later date.

Hilda Dowley, from Dublin, shares a well-tested recipe for the Christmas period.

By sheer coincidence, three of our neighbours’ daughters were getting married within the same

month as our own daughter. I decided that this merited a pre-nuptial lunch! It then occurred to me that the son and only child of a dear friend of mine had got married at the beginning of the summer, so our celebratory neighbourhood event became a pre and post-nuptial lunch! It was indeed a very special get-together, which strengthened our community spirit well beyond the much narrower confines of one family’s wedding preparations. Although the locations of the four weddings were as far apart as Spitsbergen Island North of Norway and Nice in the South of France, the strengthened bonds between us all promise to remain close for years to come. Everybody loved the simple food I had prepared and of course the Tarte Amandine particularly. Knowing it would be such a hit, I had printed out the recipe in advance and gave everyone a copy as they left, together with my good wishes for long and lasting marriages. 🍷

Ingredients:**For the pastry:**

- ▶ 225g (8oz) plain flour
- ▶ 100g (4oz) butter, cubed
- ▶ 50g (2oz) caster sugar
- ▶ 1 egg
- ▶ 1 table spoon water

For the almond filling:

- ▶ 175g (6oz) butter
- ▶ 175g (6oz) caster sugar
- ▶ 4 eggs
- ▶ 175g (6oz) ground almonds
- ▶ half jar of mincemeat

For the Topping:

- ▶ 75g (3oz) icing sugar
- ▶ juice of 1 lemon
- ▶ 50g (2oz) flaked almonds

Method

Preheat oven and a baking sheet to 190°C/fan 170/gas 5. Rub flour and butter together, add sugar, mix briefly, add egg and water. Mix until just holding together. Roll out pastry and line a 28cm (11in) flan tin with it, pricking the base. For the filling, process butter and sugar until creamy, add the eggs and blend, mix in the almonds and extract. Spread a *thin* layer of mincemeat (to prevent it from becoming too sweet) over the pastry base. Spoon the almond mixture on top. Sit the tart tin on the hot baking sheet, bake for 45-50 minutes until the pastry is crisp and golden brown. Make a glacé icing from sugar and lemon juice, adding water to make it a pouring consistency. Spread over tart and sprinkle with flaked almonds. Return to oven for about five minutes.

I would love to be with you all when you take your first bite! Happy Christmas!



Photo: goodfoodforus