

Butter Tarts

Source: New York Times

Ingredients

Pastry

- 1½ cups flour
- pinch fine sea salt
- ½ cup unsalted butter, cubed
- ¼ cup ice water
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1 tsp white vinegar

Filling

- ¼ cup raisins, optional
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 large egg

Method

1. Make the pastry: in a large mixing bowl, combine the flour and salt. Using a pastry blender or your fingertips, rub the butter into the flour until the mixture is in pea-size pieces.
2. In a small bowl, mix the water, egg yolk, and vinegar until well combined. Add the liquid to the flour mixture, using a fork to combine. Add 1 tbsp more water if it looks dry.
3. Knead the dough several times by hand to bring it together and shape into a flat square. Wrap with plastic and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
4. Once chilled, roll out the dough into a 16" x 12" rectangle about ⅛ to ¼" thick. Flour the work surface and rolling pin as you work with the dough.
5. Use a circular 4" cookie cutter to cut 12 pieces. Reroll the dough if needed to cut more circles, but try to cut as many pieces on the first pass. With your fingertips, press each circle into the cup of a standard muffin tin, so that the edge of the dough is flush with the pan. Refrigerate while you make the filling.
6. In a bowl, cover the raisins with hot tap water to plump. Heat the oven to 425°F.
7. Make the filling: in a bowl, mix the brown sugar and salt, then beat the butter into the sugar by hand until smooth. Add the vanilla and egg and mix until combined. Do not use an electric mixer; it will add too much air to the filling.
8. Drain the raisins and place seven or eight raisins in each chilled tart shell.
9. Divide the filling evenly among the tart shells, filling each one about halfway. Place the muffin tin on a baking sheet. Bake 13 to 15 minutes for a runnier tart (see Notes) and 17 to 19 minutes for a firmer one.

10. A few minutes after removing the tarts from the oven, run a knife or offset spatula around the edge of each tart to loosen. Let cool completely in the tin. To remove, run a butter knife or offset spatula around and under each tart to pop it out of the tin.

Notes

For a runnier tart, use $\frac{1}{3}$ cup maple syrup, corn syrup, or golden syrup, plus $\frac{2}{3}$ cup brown sugar.