

Normandy Pear tart

This is one of few recipes from *Supercook* that has withstood the test of time. (How styles change.) It's one of Carol's standby favourites and has always proved very popular with recipients. What makes it special/unusual is the walnut pastry, so you really have to make your own.

If you are feeling lazy, tinned pears make a very acceptable substitute to the poached fresh originals.

Planning

serves:	6-8
prep time:	60 mins
cooking time:	40 mins

Ingredients

10 oz plain flour
½ tsp salt
3 oz butter, cut into cm cubes
2 oz vegetable fat, cut into cm cubes
4 oz caster sugar (+ 2 tbs)
1½ oz walnuts, finely chopped
2 egg yolks, lightly beaten
3 tbs iced water
1 egg white, lightly beaten
2 oz sugar
5 fl oz water
4 large pears, peeled, halved & cored
5 fl oz double cream, stiffly whipped
2 tbs chopped walnuts

Method

Make the pastry. Sift the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl. Add the butter and vegetable fat cut into small pieces. Rub the fats into the flour with your fingertips to the famed breadcrumb stage. Mix in the 4 ounces sugar and finely chopped walnuts.

Now add the egg yolks together with a spoonful of the water and mix in with a broad-bladed knife. Mix and knead the dough, adding a little more water if the dough is too dry, until it is smooth. Place the dough ball in greasproof/waxed paper and chill for 30 mins.

Meanwhile make the filling. In a medium saucepan, dissolve the 2 oz sugar in the water over low heat, stirring constantly. Once dissolved, increase the heat and boil the syrup for 4 mins. Add the pear halves to the syrup, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10-15 mins until they are tender but remain firm. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside to cool.

Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas 5.

Roll out 2/3rds of the pastry dough into a large circle to line a 9-inch flan ring. Ease the dough into the ring trimming off any excess. Removing the pears from the syrup with a slotted spoon, arrange them cut-side down in the flan case, narrow ends towards the centre.

Roll out the remaining 1/3rd dough large enough to cover the tart. Cut a 3-inch hole in the centre of the dough circle. Dampen the edges of the pastry case and place the doughnut-shaped lid on top, gently pressing the edges together. Trim off any excess dough. Brush the top of the tart with the beaten egg white and dust with the remaining 2 tbs caster sugar.

Bake the tart in the top of the oven for 30-35 mins or until the pastry is firm to the touch. remove from the oven and set aside to cool completely.

Once cool, remove the tart from the flan ring. Spoon the whipped cream into the centre, over the hole in the pastry,

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and sprinkle over the chopped walnuts.