



Pear, Blue Cheese and Walnut Tarts

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This easy tart can be served as an appetizer or with a simple green salad as a light lunch or dinner. If you don't like blue cheese, substitute your favorite Brie cheese. If you love blue cheese and want a stronger blue-cheese flavor use half Roquefort and half Brie cheese.

Makes 4 Individual Tarts

Ingredients:

- 1 sheet Pepperidge Farm or Dufour Puff Pastry Sheets, thawed in the refrigerator
- All-purpose flour, for rolling out the puff pastry

Filling:

- 2 pears, sliced thin or 1 14.5 ounce can pear slices packed in syrup
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- Kosher salt
- ½ cup walnut halves
- 4 ounces Fromager d'Affinois Bleu cheese or other mild and creamy Brie-like blue cheese
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, plus 1 teaspoon for garnish (optional)

Special equipment: Silicone baking mat or parchment paper

Method:

1. Roll out the pastry dough on a lightly floured surface to eliminate creases. It should be about ¼ inch thick. Measure dough and cut into four equal pieces. Transfer the disks to a baking sheet lined with a silicone baking mat or parchment paper. Score the dough by drawing a square frame around the inside ½-inch of the disk. You will place the filling inside the frame. Refrigerate on the baking sheet.
2. Meanwhile, drizzle the sliced pears with a tablespoon of melted butter and toss to coat evenly.
3. Cut the cheese into small pieces—I cut the cheese into two wedges and cut from the point to the end to make strips.
4. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
5. Remove the pastry from the refrigerator and place about 5 pieces of cheese over the middle of each disk, leaving the ½-inch border around the sides. Top each with pear slices and season with fresh thyme leaves.



6. At this point, you can top with walnut halves but know that they will become very toasted during the cooking process. If you don't like things very toasted, you can add after baking.
7. Brush each pastry border with melted butter.
8. Place in the pre-heated oven and bake until the pastry is golden, about 15 minutes.
9. Remove from oven and let tarts cool for 10-15 minutes.
10. Serve the tarts warm or room temperature garnished with a few fresh thyme leaves, if desired, and a green salad.