



French Apple Tart

December 1, 2022

This This French Apple tart, a.k.a. Tarte Aux Pommes is adapted from [Mastering the Art of French Cooking by Julia Child](#). The tart uses a classic French pâte sucrée pastry dough that is very easy to make. Because this dough is enriched with egg yolks, it is easy to work with and very forgiving. The flavor and texture is more like a lightly sweet sugar cookie than the

flaky American pie dough. Bake any extra dough sprinkled with a little sugar and enjoy them as a cook's treat!

Makes 2 Tarts

Grilling Method: Direct/Medium Heat

Ingredients:

- 6 ounces unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated white sugar
- 2 large egg yolks
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon fine-grain sea salt

Method:

1. **Make the dough:** Cream the butter and sugar together in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on low-to-medium speed, until combined. Do not over mix or whip.
2. Using a low speed, add the egg yolks and mix for about 35 seconds. Add the flour and salt and mix until the dough comes together. Don't overmix it. It will have the texture of cookie dough.
3. Shape the dough into a disk in the center of a piece of 12" x 16" parchment paper and fold in the edges to seal. Cut disc down the middle with a dough cutter. Let dough rest in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or up to 3 days. If storing for more than a few hours, I place the parchment covered dough in a re-closeable plastic bag so that it doesn't absorb any refrigerator odors. Note: You can also make the apple-sauce filling up to 3 days in advance and keep tightly covered in the refrigerator.
4. When ready to use: Unfold the parchment paper and place dough in the center. Cover with another piece of parchment paper. Using a rolling pin, roll to an even thickness of about ¼ inch.
5. To transfer the dough to the pan, place a round 9.5 or [14-inch rectangular](#) tart pan [with a removeable bottom] in the center of the dough. Using the parchment paper as a guide, flip the pan over. Carefully remove the parchment paper.

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6. Working left to right, lift the edges in stages, so that the weight of the dough fills the frame of the tart pan. When you have done this, you can trim the edges cleanly by rolling the rolling pin over the top of the tart pan. If you have a hole in the crust or need to add more to the sides, simply pinch a small piece of the dough from your scraps and “patch the hole.” It will stick and the crust will become seamless.
7. Refrigerate or freeze the dough-filled tart pan until ready to use—at least an hour.
Most recipes call for a pre-baked pie crust but I found that it was an unnecessary step in this recipe using the sweet tart dough above.

Apple Tart

Ingredients:

Tart Dough in pan (see above)

Filling:

- 4-5 pounds cooking apples like Granny Smith, peeled, cored and cut in quarters
- 1 large lemon, juiced
- 1 cup granulated white sugar
- 2/3-1 cup Cognac or Calvados
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon fine-grain sea salt
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter

Topping:

- 6 small tart-sweet apples such as Smitten, Pink Lady or Honeycrisp
- Heavy Cream
- Granulated white Sugar
- Apricot jam, preferably low sugar

Special Equipment: 9.5 (round) or 14-inch (rectangle) tart pan with removeable bottom

Method:

1. **Make the filling:** Place the peeled and chunked apples in a large Dutch oven or heavy-duty pot with a lid. Add lemon juice and sugar and cook covered over low heat for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender.
2. Add the Cognac, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt and cook for 5-10 more minutes or until it is the texture of applesauce. Use a blending fork or potato masher to make the apples smooth and stir well. You don't want any hard chunks. Add the butter and mix well as it melts. Taste and adjust seasonings to your liking.

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3. Increase the heat and cook, stirring, until applesauce is thick and not watery at all. Since this is your filling, you want it to be very thick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Remove from stove and let cool. If making in advance, place in a non-reactive container with a lid and refrigerate until ready to make your tart. Any leftover applesauce is terrific served with grilled or roasted pork, sausages or chicken.
4. Preheat oven to 375°F.
5. Peel the small apples for topping. Cut four chunks off the core and set aside to cut into slices. Place each apple quarter flat-side down on a cutting board and holding each side between your thumb and forefinger, cut lengthwise into 1/8-inch slices. Keep the quarters together and set aside for topping the tarts.
6. Remove the tart pan and applesauce from the refrigerator. IF any liquid has come to the surface of the applesauce, remove it, or stir it into the sauce. You want the applesauce to be as “dry” as possible.
7. Spread the cold applesauce in the pastry shell making sure that it is even and goes almost to the top.
8. Cover applesauce with the apple slices. Make sure that they are closely overlapping. You can arrange them in a layer of concentric circles for a round tart or shingled in the rectangular tart pan.
9. **Note:** For the round pan, it makes it easier to do this if you start by laying out a flat circle of the apple sliced as close to the edge as possible and start overlapping from that point. For the rectangle, place two flat slices at one end of the rectangle and then add two slices that overlap in the middle. If you have any gaps, you can “sneak” an apple slice into the gap.
10. Place tart pan on a baking sheet—sheet pan or cookie sheet—that is fitted with a piece of parchment paper to catch any drippings. Using a pastry brush, brush/dot heavy cream over the tart. Sprinkle lightly all over the apples with sugar.
11. Bake in upper third of the preheated oven for about 30-40 minutes, or until the apples have browned lightly and are tender.
12. Meanwhile, place the apricot jam in a small sauce pan/milk pan and heat until liquid. Do not boil or overcook the jam. Keep warm as it will need to be hot to brush on the baked tart.
13. I love the rustic look of slightly burned apple edges and my round tarts got properly “singed” as they baked but I needed to place my rectangular tarts under the broiler for 1-2 minutes at the end of the cooking time to get more color. *If you do this, do not step away, as it will burn very quickly!*
14. Remove from oven and place on a cooling rack. Brush carefully with a light coat of the hot apricot jam.
15. Let Cool. Serve room temperature or cold with or without homemade whipped cream.