

# Custard Tart

**Makes one 23cm (9") tart**

**The pastry for this tart shell needs to be blind baked before being filled with custard and baked again.**

## Sweet Shortcrust Pastry Tart Shell

**Making time: 10 minutes | Resting time: 1 hour |**

**Baking time: 35 minutes**



## Notes

- This pastry is not suitable for a stand mixer unless you have a pastry beater attachment.
- If wanting to make this pastry by hand, freeze the butter in a block first then grate the butter. Use the butter frozen straight from the freezer.
- In warm weather use the fridge to help you manage soft pastry. Rechill the dough each time it gets too soft to work with.
- Pastry dough can be refrigerated for up to 3 days, or frozen for up to 3 months.
- There is no need to grease the tart tin as the pastry has enough butter to prevent it from sticking.
- You can make the pastry and tart shell the day prior to, make timing easier, if desired.

## Ingredients

- 255g plain (all purpose) flour, chilled
- 80g icing sugar mixture or pure icing sugar, chilled
- 125g cubed unsalted butter, chilled
- Pinch salt
- 2 egg yolks, from chilled eggs
- 20g (1 tablespoon) ice cold water

## Method | Food Processor

1. Place the flour, sugar, salt and butter into the bowl of a food processor and process until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.

2. In a small jug or bowl, whisk together the water and egg yolks, then turn the food processor on and add to the flour mixture, processing just until the mixture starts to clump together.
3. Turn the pastry out onto a piece of plastic wrap and bring the dough together to form a 2cm thick disc.
4. Wrap tightly in the plastic wrap then refrigerate for 1 hour or up to 3 days.

## **Method | Pastry Cutter**

1. Freeze the butter, then grate the required amount for the recipe into a bowl. Refreeze the grated butter for 30 minutes.
2. Place the flour, sugar, salt and frozen butter into a large mixing bowl, then using a pastry cutter, cut the butter into the dry ingredients until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
3. Add the water to the egg yolks and whisk together then sprinkle over the flour mixture.
4. Use a butter knife in a cutting motion to bring the pastry together.
5. Turn the mixture out onto a piece of plastic wrap and bring the dough together to form a 2cm thick disc.
6. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill the dough for 1 hour or up to 3 days.

## **Lining the tart tin**

1. Remove the dough from the fridge and leave to sit at room temperature until it's pliable. This can take anywhere from 5 minutes in warm weather to 30 minutes (or even longer) in cooler weather.
2. Lightly flour a work surface and place the pastry on top. Then very lightly dust the top of the pastry with some flour and rub over the surface with your hand. Using a rolling pin, roll the pastry into a 3mm thick circle.
3. Alternatively, if the weather is really warm, place the pastry between two sheets of baking paper to roll out the pastry which can help if it's sticking.
4. At any stage, if the pastry gets too warm, transfer it to a baking tray and pop it back into the fridge to firm up for 10 minutes before continuing.
5. Place your rolling pin in the centre of your pastry circle, then carefully pick a side of the pastry and fold it over the rolling pin. Using the rolling pin, lift the pastry over to your tart tin and unfold the pastry over the top.

6. Gently arrange the pastry into the tart tin being careful to make sure the pastry is pressed up right into the bottom crease of the tin. (This will help to avoid the pastry from shrinking into any air pockets.)
7. Use a finger to press the pastry gently into the fluted side of the tin and if needed, patch the pastry using any overhanging pieces of pastry pressing it into place.
8. Trim the top edge of the tart tin with a knife and smooth over any rough areas on the edge of the pastry with your finger.
9. Using a fork prick the base all over then place onto a plate and freeze for 40 minutes. (This helps to prevent the pastry from shrinking.)
10. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 160°C / 140°C fan forced for 40 minutes.
11. To blind bake the tart shell, remove the tart tin from the freezer and arrange a sheet of foil on top of the pastry making sure that the foil is pressed right into the bottom edge of the tin then fold any excess foil over the top edge of the pastry. Repeat this with another sheet of foil in the opposite direction.
12. Fill with baking weights or rice/beans right to the top and bake for 20 minutes, then remove from the oven and carefully lift the foil with the baking weights still in place off the pastry and set aside.
13. Return the tart to the oven and continue to bake until the pastry is cooked through on the base. You can tell if the base is cooked when there are no dark patches visible.
14. If the pastry is starting to darken on the top edge, but the base needs longer to cook, fold strips of foil over the top edge and continue to bake until the pastry has finished cooking. (It could also mean your oven is too hot.)
15. Once the pastry is cooked through, remove from the oven and brush lightly with egg white making sure to cover the base and the sides, then return to the oven for 2 minutes. This creates a seal and helps to prevent soggy pastry.
16. Remove the tart shell from the oven then leave to cool completely in the tin.
17. Once cooled completely the tart is ready to fill.

If not filling the tart shell straight away, keep in an airtight container for up to 3 days, or it can be frozen for up to 2 months.

If baking the tart as soon as the tart shell has cooled, reduce the temperature of the oven to 120°C / 100°C fan forced.

## Custard Filling

**Preparation:** 10 minutes

### Notes

- Left-over egg whites freeze really well for up to 3 months.
- Vanilla bean paste will give this tart the best flavour but vanilla extract is ok to use if that's all you have.

### Ingredients

- 600ml thickened cream (Fresh cream for NZ bakers, Whipping cream for UK bakers)
- 100g eggs (2 large eggs cracked weight)
- 80g egg yolks (4 large eggs)
- 100g caster sugar (superfine)
- 1 tablespoon vanilla bean paste, or 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- Fresh or powdered nutmeg, to taste

### Method

1. Position an oven rack in the middle of the oven, then preheat to 120°C / 100°C fan forced.
2. Place the cream into a medium saucepan and heat gently on low.
3. Meanwhile, place the eggs and egg yolks in a mixing bowl and whisk together briefly then whisk in the sugar and vanilla, stirring gently rather than whisking vigorously until the sugar is mixed in. (Make sure you whisk the eggs and sugar mixture straight away or the sugar will cause the egg yolks to cook and will form lumps.)
4. Bring the cream up to a gentle simmer then remove from the heat.
5. Begin stirring the egg mixture in the bowl slowly using a whisk and at the same time add a third of the cream. Once this is mixed in, add the remainder of the cream stirring gently. Don't over whisk or it will create bubbles that will rise up onto the surface of the custard.
6. If you notice little specks of egg floating in the liquid, you can strain it through a sieve, however this usually creates a lot of bubbles so be sure to pour the liquid gently from a low height.
7. Fill the blind baked tart shell with the custard mixture until it reaches the top. I suggest you do this close to the oven so you don't have far to go carrying the filled tart.

8. Skim off any bubbles with a spoon and bake for 30 minutes, then carefully pull the oven rack out a short distance with the tart on it and dust with as much or as little nutmeg as you like.
9. Push the oven shelf back in gently (the middle will still be liquid) and continue to bake for another 10 - 15 minutes, or until the outside edge feels firm but the inside of the tart still has a good jelly like wobble. If it is still liquid keep baking.
10. Remove the tart from the oven and allow to cool completely at room temperature, then carefully remove from the tin and chill in the fridge for 2 hours before serving.

Best served on the day of baking.

The pastry should stay crisp for up to 2 days.

Store in the fridge in a sealed container for up to 3 days.

💡 To use up the left-over egg whites, try my [Orange & Berry Friands](#) recipe...you'll love them!