



Chocolate Tart/Tarte au Chocolat

Servings: **0.5 tart**

Dorie Greenspan calls this the classic sweet tart dough, which pastry chefs learn as apprentices. More of a cookie dough, it's used with sweet dessert tarts, and it's easiest to make in a food processor, if you have one. This was my first time using this recipe (and not Martha Stewart's version) and I thought the addition of ground almonds was delicious. Though I halved it, I still have quite a bit remaining, which I think I'll roll out, sprinkle it with coarse sugar and cut it into small cookies.

Ingredients

Makes enough for three 9-inch tart crusts.

2 1/2 sticks (10 ounces; 290 grams) unsalted butter, at room temperature

1 1/2 cups (150 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted

Lightly packed 1/2 cup (2 1/4 ounces; 70 grams) ground blanched almonds

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

2 large eggs, at room temperature

3 1/2 cups (490 grams) all-purpose flour

For filling

8 ounces (224 grams) bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped

2/3 cup (160 grams) heavy cream

2 large egg yolks, at room temperature

2 tablespoons (1 ounce; 30 grams) unsalted butter, at room temperature

1/2 moist, plump vanilla bean, split lengthwise

1 fully baked 6 1/2-inch (16-cm) tart shell made from Sweet Tart Dough

Directions

1. To make the dough: Place the butter in the work bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade and process, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed, until creamy. Add the confectioners' sugar and process to blend well. Add the ground almonds, salt, and vanilla and continue to process until smooth, scraping the bowl as necessary. Lightly stir the eggs together with a fork and, with the machine running, add them to the work bowl; process for a few seconds to blend. Finally, add the flour and pulse until the mixture just starts to come together. When the dough forms moist curds and clubs and then starts to form a ball, stop! — you don't want to overwork it. The dough will be very soft, and that's just as it should be. (If you want to make the dough in a mixer, use the paddle attachment. First beat the butter until it is smooth, then add the remaining ingredients in the order given above. Just be careful when you add the flour — you must stop mixing as soon as the flour is incorporated.)

2. Gather the dough into a ball and divide it into 3 pieces. Gently press each piece into a disk and wrap each disk in plastic. Allow the dough to rest in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours, or for up to 2 days, before rolling and baking. (The dough can be wrapped airtight and frozen for up to a month.)

3. To roll and bake tart crusts: For each tart, butter the right-sized tart pan and place it on a parchment-lined baking sheet. If you are making more than one tart, work with one piece of dough at a time.

4. What makes this dough so delicious — lots of butter — also makes it a little difficult to roll. The easiest way to work with pate sucree is to roll it out between sheets of plastic wrap. Just flatten a large piece of plastic wrap against the counter and roll the dough between that and another piece of plastic. Turn the dough over often so that you can roll it out on both sides, and as you're rolling, make sure to lift the sheets of plastic several times so that they don't crease and get rolled into the dough. (If the dough becomes too soft, just slip it, still between plastic, onto a baking sheet and pop it into the fridge for a few minutes.) Remove one sheet of the plastic and center the dough (exposed side down) over the tart pan. Press the dough against the bottom of the pan and up the sides, removed the top sheet of plastic wrap and roll your rolling pin across the rim of the pan to cut off the excess. If the dough cracks or splits while you're working, don't worry — you can patch the cracks with leftover dough (moisten the edges to "glue" them into place). Just be careful not to stretch the dough in the pan (what you stretch now will shrink later). Chill for at least 30 minutes in the refrigerator. (Repeat with remaining dough, if necessary.)

5. When you are ready to bake the crust(s), preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line the crust with a circle of parchment paper or foil and fill with dried beans or rice.

6. Bake the crust (or crusts) for 20 to 25 minutes, or just until very lightly colored. If the crust needs to be fully baked, remove the parchment and beans and bake the crust for another 3 to 5 minutes, or until golden. Transfer to a rack to cool.

Keeping: Wrapped airtight, the dough can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 2 days or frozen for a month. Frozen disks of dough take 45 to 60 minutes at average room temperature to reach a good rolling-out consistency. Baked crusts can be uncovered at room temperature for about 8 hours.

For the filling:

1. Put the chocolate in a heatproof bowl and keep it close at hand. In a small bowl, beat 1 tablespoon of the heavy cream with the egg yolks just until the eggs are liquid. Check that the butter is soft but not oily. If necessary, either beat it with a rubber spatula to soften it or smear it against the counter under the heel of your hand.

2. Pour the remaining cream into a saucepan, toss in the split vanilla bean, and bring the cream to a full boil. Pull out the vanilla bean, then pour the hot cream over the chocolate. Wait for about 30 seconds, then, working with a whisk, gently blend the cream into the chocolate. Still whisking delicately, incorporate the yolks, followed by the butter. Pour the ganache into the crust (if you have a little leftover, you can freeze it or use it to fill sandwich cookies). Jiggle the crust a bit to even out the ganache, and leave the tart on the counter until the filling set, about 20 minutes, depending on the temperature of your kitchen. (If your kitchen is really warm, pop the tart into the refrigerator for 20 minutes, just to set the ganache, then keep it at room temperature after it has set.)

Do ahead: The tart is best served at room temperature the day it is made. If you must keep it, refrigerate it over night, then let it stand at room temperature for about 2 hours before serving

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