
Demonstration

Tarte aux Pommes (Apple Tart)

Makes one 9-inch tart

Estimated time to complete: 90 minutes

Ingredients

Flour for dusting

1 recipe *Pâte Brisée*, *Pâte Sucrée*, or *Pâte Sablée* (see pages 92, 94, and 95)

For the apple compote

370 grams (13 ounces) Golden Delicious apples

½ lemon

75 grams (2½ ounces) sugar

1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise

For the garnish

3 (about 1 pound) Golden Delicious apples

½ lemon

For the *nappage*

100 grams (3½ ounces) apricot jam

Equipment

Rolling pin

Pastry brush

9-inch tart pan

Vegetable peeler

Paring knife

Melon baller, optional

Medium saucepan

Wooden spoon

Rubber spatula

Baking sheet with sides

Plastic film

2 small bowls

Metal spoon

Wire rack

Small saucepan

Fine-mesh sieve

Serving platter

Prepare your *mise en place*.

Lightly flour a clean, flat work surface. Place the dough in the center of the floured surface and, using a rolling pin, roll the dough out to a 25-centimeter (10-inch) circle about 3 millimeters (¼ inch) thick. Using a pastry brush, lightly brush off excess flour.

Roll the circle up and over the rolling pin and carefully transfer it to the tart pan. Using your fingertips, gently press the dough into the pan to make a neat fit. Pinch off any excess dough around the edges to neaten. Transfer the shell to the refrigerator for 30 minutes to chill.

While the dough is chilling, prepare the apple compote.

Using a vegetable peeler, peel the apples. Using a paring knife, cut them in half lengthwise, remove the core with the paring knife or a melon baller. Generously rub the apples with the cut lemon to prevent discoloration. Do not put the apples in acidulated water or the natural juices and sugars will be leached out. Cut the apples into 6-millimeter (¼-inch) cubes, keeping the pieces as equal in size as possible so that they will cook evenly.

Combine the sugar and 50 milliliters (3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon) water in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the apples and, using a paring knife, scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean into the pan. Add the scraped bean, cover, and place over low





heat. Cook, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, for about 20 minutes, or until the apples are translucent and all the moisture has evaporated. Take care that the apples do not disintegrate—you want a chunky mixture. If the apples are cooked before the moisture has evaporated, uncover the pan and raise the heat to high to quickly dry them out. If the moisture evaporates before the apples are ready, add a tablespoon of water or the apples will begin to caramelize and burn.

Remove the pan from the heat and, using a rubber spatula, spread the compote out on a sheet pan to stop the cooking. Cover with plastic film and let cool. While the compote is cooling, prepare the garnish.

Using a vegetable peeler, peel the apples. Using a paring knife, cut them in half lengthwise; remove the core with the paring knife or a melon baller. Generously rub the apples with the cut lemon to prevent discoloration. Do not put the apples in acidulated water or the natural juices and sugars will be leached out.

Using a chef's knife, cut each apple half lengthwise into very thin slices, no more than 3 millimeters ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch) thick. Place the apple slices in a small bowl and, using the lemon half, squeeze lemon juice over them, tossing to coat.

Preheat the oven to 177°C (350°F).

Remove the tart shell from the refrigerator. Spoon the

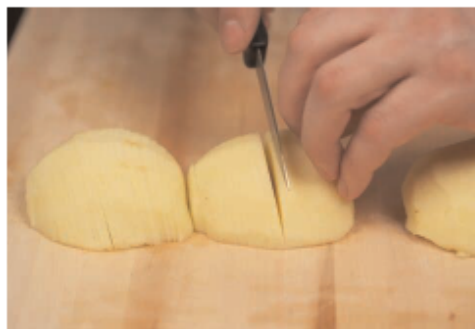
apple compote into the shell, spreading it out with a rubber spatula to make an even layer that fills the shell three-quarters full.

Starting with the outside edge, begin arranging the apple slices, slightly overlapping, in concentric circles over the top of the compote. Fill in any holes with apple scraps and then finish the center with a tight circle of apple slices.

Bake for about 1 hour, or until the crust is golden and the apple slices are beautifully caramelized and cooked through.

Remove from the oven and place on a wire rack to cool slightly.

To make the glaze, combine the apricot jam with 20 milliliters (3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon) water in a





small saucepan over medium heat and cook for just about a minute to heat through. Remove from the heat and press through a fine-mesh sieve into a small bowl. Set aside.

Unmold the tart and place on a serving platter. Using a pastry brush, lightly coat the entire top with the warm apricot glaze.

Serve warm or at room temperature.

TIPS

The tart may be made ahead and refrigerated for up to 2 days before baking. If so, lightly coat the top with melted, unsalted butter and cover with plastic film before storing.

For additional sweetness and flavor, sprinkle the top of the tart with granulated sugar or vanilla sugar (see page 82) before baking.

EVALUATING YOUR SUCCESS

The apples should be uniform, even and very thin.

The apricot *nappage* should completely, but lightly, cover the apples.

The crust should have an even edge.

The apples should be uniformly browned when the tart has finished baking.

When properly baked, the crust will be completely cooked in the center.