



Apple Fig Pie

Crostata di Mela e Fichi

A crostata is a two-crust pie made with a rich pasta frolla (short pastry dough) and a filling of marmalade. Originally the dough was made using lard and I remember jars of the white, solidified stuff that my grandmother rendered from chicken fat, and kept in the refrigerator. This recipe gives you two options for the dough; one uses butter and the other olive oil. Sunflower oil is good too. Either one you choose will give you great results.

Apples combined with fig jam is the unusual filling. Yellow Delicious apples are the most popular in Italy but this crostata is also great made with tart Cortland apples or a combination of both.

Serves 6-8

Ingredients

ALTERNATE PASTRY DOUGH WITH OLIVE OIL OR SUNFLOWER OIL

1 3/4 cup unbleached all purpose flour

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup olive oil, not extra virgin, or sunflower oil

3 tablespoons cold water

PASTRY DOUGH WITH BUTTER

2 1/2 cups King Arthur™ Unbleached, All-Purpose Flour

1/2 cup sugar

1/4 teaspoon salt

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces

1 large egg

1 large egg yolk

Grated zest of 1 lemon

2 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

FILLING

8 large Yellow Delicious or Cortland apples, peeled, and thinly sliced

1 cup fig jam

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 1/3 cup sugar

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground cloves

Pinch black pepper

1 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons cold butter cut into bits

1 tablespoon milk or cream

2 tablespoons sliced almonds

2 tablespoons coarse brown sugar

Directions

Combine the apple slices in a large bowl with the fig jam, and lemon juice. In a smaller bowl, mix together the sugar, cinnamon, cloves, pepper and salt.

Pour the sugar mixture over the apple mixture and coat them well.

Directions for butter based dough

In a food processor or in a bowl, mix together the flour, sugar, and salt. Add the butter and pulse, or cut in with a pastry blender, until the mixture resembles coarse cornmeal. Add the egg, egg yolk, lemon zest, and juice through the feed tube, or stir in, and pulse or mix just until a dough starts to form. Gather the dough into a ball and wrap in wax paper. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Directions for oil based dough

Mix the flour and salt together in a bowl or the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Pour the oil slowly into the bowl or through the food processor feed tube with the motor running. Combine until the mixture is coarse and looks like uncooked oatmeal. Add the water a little at a time until a smooth ball of dough is formed. Gather the dough into a ball, wrap it in plastic wrap and refrigerate. .

Preheat the oven to 375F

Divide the dough in half. On a lightly floured board surface, roll out one piece to a 13-inch circle. Fit it into a 10-inch tart pan with a removable bottom, and trim off the excess dough. Or line a 9 x 2 - inch pie plate with one rolled out sheet of pie crust. Trim edges. Spread the filling into the crust, packing it in well. Dot the filling with the butter. Alternately, roll the dough out between two sheets of lightly floured parchment paper to make the process easier.

Roll out the second piece of dough to an 11-inch circle. With a pastry wheel, cut the dough into 1/2-inch wide strips. Make a lattice top for the tart. Pinch the ends of the strips even with the tart shell sides. i

Place the crostata on a baking pan to absorb any spillover as it bakes.

Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or just until the top begins to brown. Brush the top with the milk or cream and sprinkle with the almonds and coarse sugar and continue baking until the crust is nicely browned.

Remove the crostata from the oven and let cool completely on a rack. If using a removable tart shell, remove the sides and cut the crostata into wedges to serve.

This recipe is featured in show 1706 - Students in the Kitchen.