

Lemon Thyme Shortcrust (Pâté Sucrée)

Poetry & Pies

prep time: 20-25 minutes (includes rolling and resting)

chill time: 70-80 minutes (in 2 to 3 parts)

bake time: 30-40 minutes

total time: 2 hours, 25 minutes

yields: crust for one 9" to 10" tart pan



Ingredients

- 1 ¼ cups (156g) flour (spooned then leveled)
- ½ cup (65g) powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon (3g) sea salt
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon thyme leaves, woody parts removed
- 8 tablespoons (113g) cold, unsalted butter (diced)
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 ½ tablespoons (22g) heavy whipping cream
- ½ tablespoon vanilla extract

Instructions

1. First, you want to wash your lemon and thyme to remove any dirt. I like to scrub my lemons with vegetable wash. While the thyme dries (you can't really pat it down easily), dice up your butter then put it in the fridge to keep it nice and chilled.
2. Zest your lemon (as finely as possible) and remove as much of the brown woody part of the thyme as you can. A few green stems is fine. Process those with your flour, sugar, and salt.
3. Add in the butter and pulse until a wet-sand texture, with some butter pieces a little smaller than peas and the rest is smaller and mixed in with the flour like wet sand.

4. Whisk the egg yolk, cream, and vanilla together then add to the processor. Pulse a few times, until it begins to clump together and pull away from the edge. (If it's easier, you can dump the flour into a bowl and gently stir the egg/cream in to avoid over mixing.)
5. Dump out onto a piece of plastic wrap and pat into a 6" disc. If any flour was left in the corners of your food processor, sprinkle those over the dough before forming into a disc. Double wrap the disc and chill at least an hour, or up to 2 or 3 days. If you want to keep it longer, you need to freeze it then let it thaw in the fridge.
6. When ready to use, let the dough sit on the counter for 10 minutes, until a little pliable. Lightly flour a clean work surface or rolling mat. Sprinkle a little more flour over the top. Begin rolling out the dough, rotating the rolling pin as you go. I like to imagine it's a clock and I need to roll it over every hour—so top down is 12 and 6, left right is 3 and 9, etc. Roll it out to be 2-3 inches bigger in diameter than your tart pan (e.g. a little over 12" for a 10" pan).
7. Be sure to flip and rotate the dough every so often, sprinkling a tiny bit more flour as needed to 1) keep it from sticking and 2) ensure you're rolling evenly. I tend to roll the bottom left too thin and the top right too thick. Rotating balances this out.
8. If any bits of the edge crack or break, gently press them back together with your hands. If the dough has become warm (room temperature), cover it with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 10-20 minutes (sliding it onto a cutting board or rimless cookie sheet helps). Otherwise, you can gently transfer it to your tart pan. Very gently lift the edges and press it into the corners of the pan, rotating as you go. You want to *ease* it into the pan. Be sure to press it into the scalloped edges as well, then fold the overhanging crust to a 90 degree angle over the edge.
9. Using a rolling pin or sharp knife, cut off the overhanging edges of the dough. Freeze for 10 minutes to set the crust. Cut any trimmings into cookie-like shapes or leaves to use as decoration on your finished tart or simply to eat! You can bake them on the parchment lined cookie sheet next to the tart (see step 11), but you'll need to remove them after they turn golden, around 10-12 minutes.
10. If pre-baking or par-baking the crust, line with a double layer of foil (criss cross each layer so there's enough to cover all edges). Loosely fold it over the edge of the pan without sealing it in. Fill the pan with rice or beans or pie weights. Rice is my favorite.
11. Bake on a parchment lined cookie sheet for 30 minutes at 375 (or as directed by your recipe). If par-baking, you can fill it at this point then finish baking. If fully pre-baking

(for a no-bake filling), remove the rice and foil and bake another 10-15 minutes, until the bottom begins to look golden.

Enjoy!