



Pumpkin and Pepita Tart

Month: May

Ingredient: Pumpkin

Season: Autumn

Serves 6

Almost any cooked vegetable can be used to make this sort of open tart. The vegetable must be cooked first and well-drained so as not to spoil the texture of the filling. On another occasion try carrot, silver beet or Jerusalem artichoke, chunked, chopped or pureed, and perhaps use a generous quantity of herbs instead of cheese.

The chunks of brightly-coloured pumpkin make this a very cheerful-looking tart. It is quite rich if made with 35% cream and yet not sufficiently luscious if made with milk. I compromise and use a low-fat cream and the best free-range eggs.

You will need

Equipment

Chopping board

Cook's knife

Large non-stick frying pan (24-26 cm diameter)

A lid to cover the frying pan

Measuring spoons

Measuring cups

Wooden spoon

Fine skewer for testing

Whisk

Mixing bowls

Cheese grater

Fine grater for nutmeg

Baking tray

Ingredients

1 x 20 cm tart base, baked blind
400 g pumpkin
1 onion, halved and sliced into half-moons
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons pepitas (inner kernel of pumpkin seeds)

Filling

3 free-range eggs
2 egg yolks
2 cups low-fat cream
freshly ground nutmeg
freshly ground pepper
half cup grated parmesan

Preheat oven to 170 degrees Celsius.

Adult help needed. Cutting pumpkin needs great care. Ensure that the flat side of the chunk is downside on the board and carve away the peel. Children should never cut pumpkin unsupervised! Cut the pumpkin into slices and the slices into 1 cm dice.

Heat the oil in the pan. Saute the onion until limp and starting to colour. Add the pumpkin dice and the salt. Stir. Cover the pan and lower heat to moderate. After 10 minutes remove the lid, test that the pumpkin is tender, raise the heat and stir until the pumpkin and the onion have started to catch at the edges. Tip both into a mixing bowl. Add the pepitas.

In another bowl lightly whisk the eggs and yolks together. Whisk in the cream just enough to mix. Tip in the pumpkin and onion mixture and stir. Stir in 2/3 of the parmesan. Taste and adjust the filling for salt and additional pepper.

Open the oven door. Place the blind-baked tart shell on the baking tray and position it on the oven rack. Carefully pour in the filling, moving the chunks of pumpkin around with a spoon or fork if necessary to ensure an even distribution. Sprinkle the tart with the rest of the parmesan.

Bake for about 20-25 minutes until just set. **Adult help needed.** Remove tart and baking tray to a cooling rack. Allow to cool before cutting. Best served warm rather than hot.