

Pear, Juniper & Lemon Myrtle Tarte Tartin

from *The Imperfect Kitchen*

Tarte Tartin Ingredients	Amount
Pears	4-6
Golden (raw) caster sugar	200g
Water	20ml
Lemon juice	30ml
Unsalted butter	50g
Juniper berries, dried	12
Lemon zest	1 tsp
Shortcrust pastry	175g

Shortcrust Pastry Ingredients	Amount
Plain (all purpose) flour	225g
Caster sugar	2 tbl sp
Unsalted butter, cold	120g
Egg, beaten	1
Cold water	2 tsp + extra if needed

Tarte Tartin Instructions

1. Peel the pears, then put in the fridge, uncovered, for 24 hours. This helps them dry out, so they won't release too much juice and dilute the caramel when you cook them — don't worry about them going brown as this actually adds to the finished dish
2. Put the sugar into a 20cm tarte tartin dish (I use an ovenproof frying pan, as it seems a little too far fetched to buy a pan just for tarte tartin) along with the water and leave to soak for a couple of minutes
3. Cook over a medium heat until golden and fudgy. Take off the heat and stir in the butter, juniper berries and lemon zest, until well combined
4. Half and core the pears before tightly packing them in a circle in the pan, ensuring that their more attractive rounded sides are pressed lightly into the caramelised sugar and place on a medium-high heat. The pears will shrink slightly as they cook, so don't be afraid to add another pear half or two
5. Keep cooking for 10 to 15 minutes until they are a nice dark caramel colour and feel bouncy when pressed
6. Take off the heat and allow to cool completely
7. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C / 390°F. Roll out the pastry to 5mm thick, and cut out a circle slightly larger than your pan before placing back into the fridge to rest
8. Put the pastry on top of the pan before tucking it down the sides, using a spoon or knife to lift the pears and tuck the pastry under. This will ensure the pastry 'hugs' the fruit as it cooks, keeping the tart nice and compact
9. Bake for about 30 minutes until the pastry is golden, then remove from the oven. Allow to cool for 5 minutes, then place a plate, slightly larger than the pan, on top and then, very carefully, using oven gloves, invert the tart on to the plate. Best served warm, with crème fraîche

Shortcrust Pastry Instructions

1. Sift the flour into a large mixing bowl and add the sugar and a pinch of salt. Grate in the butter, then rub together until it is coarse crumbs.
2. Mix the egg with the water and sprinkle over the mixture. Mix together into a soft but not sticky dough, adding more water (if required) very gradually. Shape into a ball, and then cover with clingfilm and refrigerate for at least 20 minutes before rolling out