

Apple Pie “Pastéis de Nata” (*Portuguese egg tarts*)

Shelby Scattergood

Pastry

TOTAL TIME: 3 hours | YIELD: 24 pastries

Special equipment needed

- 2 non-stick muffin pans - can be made with 1 if you cool it fully between batches.
- Instant read thermometer

INGREDIENTS

(Apple Filling)

- 2 cups peeled and finely diced Pink Lady apples [about 2 large apples]
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 4 TBSP salted butter
- 1 TBSP lemon juice
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- Peeled zest of half a lemon (use an apple peeler to shave off several big pieces of lemon zest, try to avoid getting too much of the white pith)

(Custard)

- 3 TBSP all purpose flour
- 1 cup whole milk (NOTE: this will be split into 2 separate steps)
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 1 cup sugar
- ⅓ cup light brown sugar
- ⅔ cup water
- ½ tsp vanilla
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp table salt
- 6 large egg yolks

(Crust)

- 2 2-count packs of premade pie crusts [4 pie crusts total]
- 1 stick salted butter, softened

INSTRUCTIONS

(Apple filling)

1. Peel and finely dice your apples. We're looking for apple bits about 0.25 inches in diameter.
2. In a medium sauce pan over medium heat combine your butter and brown sugar. Cook, mixing occasionally, until the mixture is well combined, thick, and bubbling, about 8-10 minutes. Add in your apples, lemon juice and zest, cinnamon, and vanilla. Cook, stirring

occasionally, until the mixture thickens and the apples soften. This should take about 18-20 minutes.

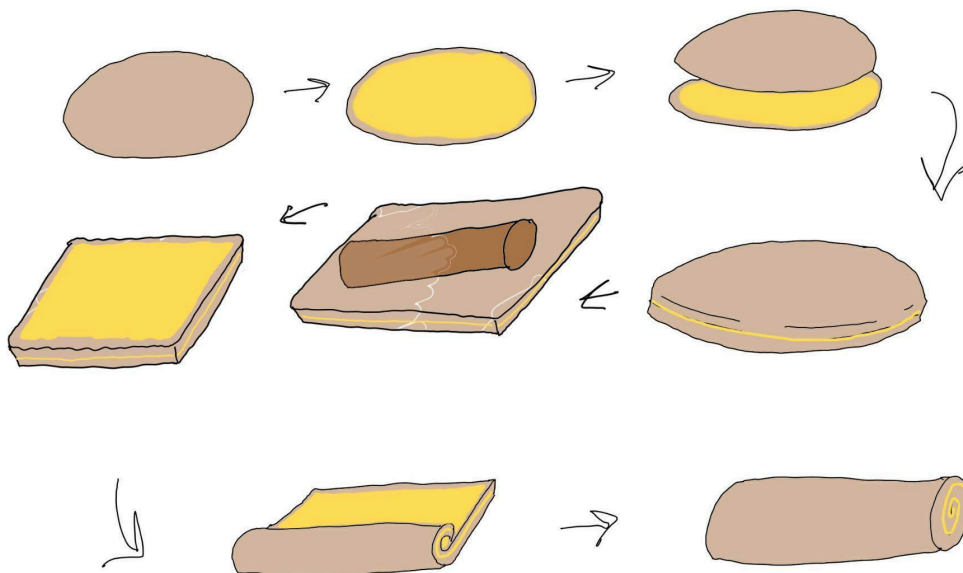
3. Once done, remove the lemon zest pieces and transfer to a heat proof dish and set aside. You can store this in the fridge for up to 3 days ahead of time.

(Custard)

1. In a medium heat-safe bowl, whisk the flour and a ¼ cup of the milk until smooth and set aside. Then, in a small saucepan combine the remaining milk with the cream and bring to a slight simmer over medium heat. Pour the hot milk/cream mixture into the flour mixture, whisk to combine.
2. While heating the milk, place another small saucepan over medium heat, combine the white sugar, brown sugar, and water and bring to a boil. Cook until an instant-read thermometer registers 220°F/104°C. Once ready, pour in a steady stream (while whisking constantly) into the hot milk/cream/flour mixture. Add in the vanilla and cinnamon.
3. Whisk in the 6 large egg yolks, strain the mixture into a container (I recommend one that's easy to pour from), cover with plastic wrap, and set aside while you prep the crust. The custard will be thin. You can make the custard up to 3 days ahead of time and leave in the fridge.

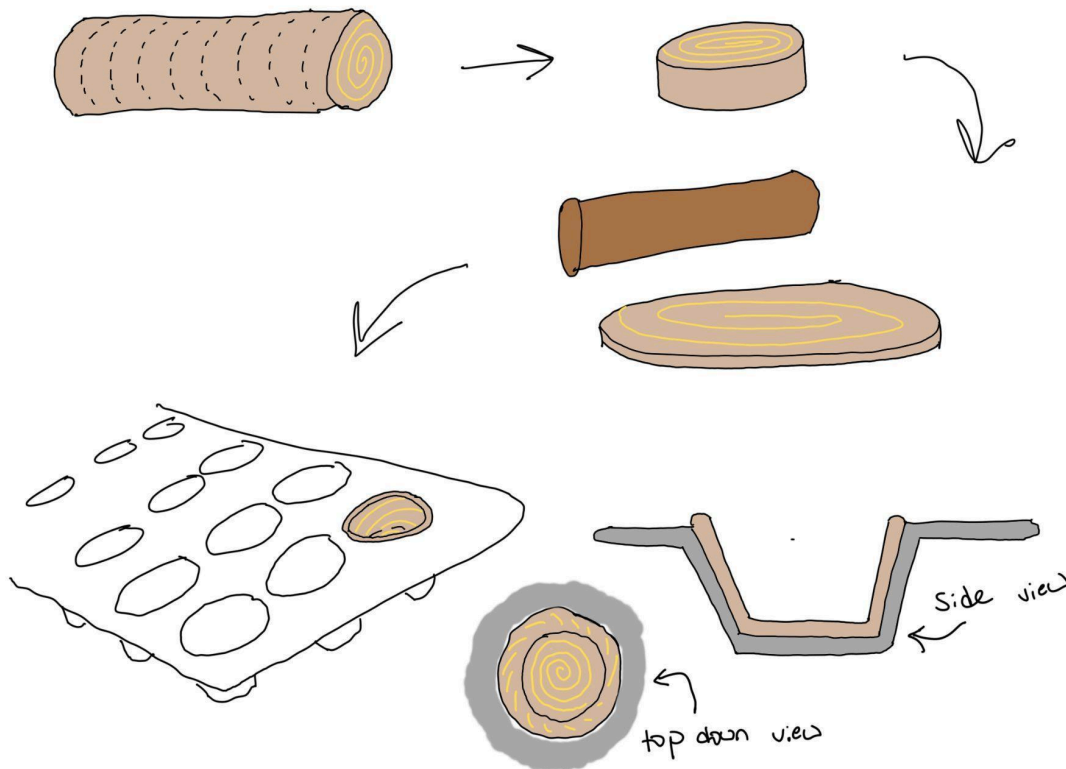
(Crust)

1. Working with 2 pie crusts at a time you want to flatten them out. Take 2 TBSP of the softened butter and spread evenly over one of the pie crusts. Take the second pie crust and place it on top. Using a rolling pin, roll out the crust sandwich into as close to a 9x13 inch rectangle as you can manage. Take another 2 TBSP of softened butter and spread that evenly on top. Now, roll the whole thing up (like you would with cinnamon rolls) starting on the longest side. You should end up with a log of dough. Repeat this process with the remaining 2 pie crusts.



(Assembly & Baking)

1. If you've made your filling and custard ahead of time and refrigerated them be sure to remove them at least an hour before baking to allow them to warm slightly.
2. Preheat your oven to 550°F/290°C or as high as your oven will go if it cannot reach this temp. I know this seems scary, but these tarts must be cooked quickly at a high temp in order to get the classic browned top and crispy crust. I promise your oven won't explode!
3. While the oven is preheating take your muffin pans and thoroughly grease each cup with either butter or non-stick spray. You now want to take each of your logs and cut them into 12 even pieces each (24 pieces total). Using a rolling pin you will flatten each piece out so that you can fully line the cups of your non-stick muffin pan. It's best to grease your fingers so you can better press the dough into the cup. You ideally want the center of the swirl to be lined up with the center of the bottom of the cup. Be very careful not to tear the crust as this will allow the custard to leak (which will make the tarts stick to the pan).



4. Next you want to scoop about 1 tsp of apple filling mixture into each prepared crust. If the filling is still cool you might need to flatten it a bit so it's even on the bottom. Next fill each crust no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way full. DO NOT fill them to the top. Doing this will cause the custard to overflow which will cause the tarts to stick to the pan.
5. Finally, bake the tarts in the oven for approximately 10-15 minutes or until the crust is golden, the custard is set (no longer jiggly), and the tops of the custard have begun to look slightly scorched. Depending on your oven and its highest temp this could take

anywhere from 10 minutes to upwards of 20. Be sure to rotate the pans halfway through baking! Because these tarts cook so quickly I don't recommend walking away. Be sure to keep an eye on them to prevent overcooking the custard.

6. Once your tarts are done remove them from the oven and allow them to cool for a few minutes to set up. Carefully remove them from your cupcake tin and place on a wire rack. If you are working with only 1 tin be sure to let it cool completely before assembling and baking the second batch of tarts.
7. These tarts are best served warm on the day they are baked. You can store them covered at room temperature for up to 48 hours, but the crust will soften. To reheat them, you can bake them in an oven for 5-7 minutes at 350°F/176°C or airfry them for 3-5 minutes at the same temperature.