

# Simple Summer Fruit Tarts

(adapted from Patricia Wells' *At Home In Provence*)

## ingredients

Use a 9 inch fluted tart pan with a removable bottom or 3 individual tart pans (4-5 inches)

### THE CRUST

A tab or two of butter for preparing tart pan

8 T unsalted butter, melted and cooled

1/2 cup sugar

1/4 t pure almond extract

1/4 t Mexican Vanilla

pinch of fine sea salt

1 1/4 cups unbleached all purpose flour (I like King Arthur for baking)

2 T finely ground raw almonds (or some almond flour, though I like the homemade here)

### THE FILLING

1/2 cup heavy whipping cream

1 large egg, lightly beaten

1/2 t almond extract

1/2 t Mexican Vanilla extract

2 T raw high quality honey, such as lavender or orange blossom

1 T ground almonds

about 1 1/2 lbs fresh apricots, pitted and halved (do not peel) or figs, halved, or any stone fruit such as peaches or plums halved (or a combo!)

Powdered Sugar for garnish, if desired



## directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°
2. Butter the bottom and sides of the tart pan and set aside (just rub every bit of the surface with butter, just enough to cover)
3. In a large bowl, combine the butter and sugar and gently combine. (A wooden spoon works great here.) Add the extracts, salt and flour and stir to combine. Do not let form into a ball. It should be very moist with the butter completely incorporated.
4. Spread the dough out over the bottom and sides of the tart pan. I like to start with the sides, using my fingers to edge the dough up the sides and then over the bottom. It should be pretty thin. Go easy, don't overwork the dough. "Don't treat it like you hate it, treat it like you love it."
5. Bake until the dough is a little puffy, about 12 to 15 minutes. It will suddenly start to puff up a little - that's the time to pull it out. Sprinkle some of the ground almonds over the crust, which will prevent it from becoming soggy. It also adds more almond flavor, yum.)
6. While the tart shell bakes, prepare the cream. Combine cream, egg, extracts and honey. Whisk to blend. Whisk in the almonds.
7. Starting at the edge, place your halved fruit around the tart pan, creating more and more circles as you get closer to the center. You just want to make sure the cut side is facing up and the fruit tilts slightly downward. Have fun with your placement. I usually put a final half, straight up, in the center.
8. Pour the cream evenly over the fruit. Get it not just on top but in between so the tart fills up. Bake in the oven until the filling is firm (but not solid, like a cake) and the tart dough is golden. \*\*You will begin to smell the wondrous smells of the fruit, cream and pastry. That's when you need to really start being aware of the tart. It's almost done.
9. Let rest on a rack to cool (I just rest mine on the raised levels of the gas burners on my stove)
10. When cool, lift the tart pan and tap the bottom gently. You may be surprised how easily it pops out and you end up with a gorgeous tart. If this makes you nervous, you may also cut and serve the tart from pan itself. Give it a try, though. It always works and it still tastes great if it breaks apart! Dust with powdered sugar, if desired.

*NOTE: Hearty fruits such as stone fruits or figs are best with this recipe. The blueberry and raspberry versions I tried tasted great but those soft fruits started to break down into mush by the time they were finished cooking. Figs, apricots and peaches (and even plums) will serve you best here.*