



T A I N Z T I A N L G

TARTS, CLASSIC OR CONTEMPORARY, PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN THE PASTRY CHEF'S REPERTOIRE.

BY DANIEL PLISKA

ABOVE: Daniel Pliska's contemporary plum/hazelnut tart with lemon/champagne sabayon and Merlot gastrique is topped with a fig/black raspberry-filled phyllo purse.
OPPOSITE: Daniel Reid's kalea-spiced caramel lacquered pineapple tart.

Sweet or savory, hot or cold, the tart garners praise whenever it comes to the table. Tarts first became popular in France with tarte Tatin, tarte Bourdaloue, tarte aux fruits and others. Tarte Tatin, the upside-down caramelized apple tart created by the Tatin sisters in Lamotte-Beuvron, France, became famous when it was served at Maxim's restaurant in Paris.

Tish Boyle, author of *Flavorful: 150 Irresistible Desserts in All-Time Favorite Flavors* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015), finds this tart irresistible with its combination of caramel-coated apples and buttery/salty crust. She also likes to make a variation by substituting pears for apples and serving the tart with a gingersnap streusel and whipped mascarpone cream.

Apple tart, which could be said to be the forerunner to apple pie, has other classic renditions, such as the Normandy tart and the Alsatian apple tart.

CLASSIC GETS AN UPDATE

Tarts came to be loved all over Europe. One notable example is England's Bakewell tart, which was created in 1860 in a pastry shop in Derbyshire. Said to have been made by accident when the pastry cook didn't follow the recipe, this butter and almond tart has since become a classic.

William Racin, CEPC, pastry chef at The Duquesne Club, Pittsburgh, was so enamored of the Bakewell tart that it inspired him to create a modern version with blueberry and lime. He likes the versatility of the Bakewell tart, and uses different jams such as apricot or raspberry depending on the season and the corresponding flavors. Club members enjoy the delicate flavor that pairs well with sweeter dessert wines.

Racin also serves Bakewell tart at banquets and for a la carte service. When plated for a la carte, he bakes smaller tarts and breaks them down into pieces for a more elaborate presentation. He serves the plated a la carte version with a lemon curd/white-chocolate/blueberry sauce, lime streusel and whipped citrus creme fraiche.

From the Austrian town of Linz located on the Danube River comes the famous linzertorte, often referred to as a tart. The recipe



PLUM HAZELNUT TART WITH CHAMPAGNE SABAYON SAUCE

Daniel Pliska, CEC, AAC, Executive Chef // University Club of MU Columbia, Missouri

YIELD: 2 (13½- X 4½-INCH) OR 2 (10-INCH) TARTS

13 oz. granulated sugar
3 oz. butter, room temperature
6 eggs
Linzertorte dough (recipe follows)
4 T. apricot or red current/
raspberry jam
6-10 plums, seeded, cut in wedges
or thick slices
Cinnamon, as needed
Champagne/Lemon Sabayon Sauce
(recipe follows)

1. Mix sugar and butter in bowl. Gradually add eggs; mix to a custard.
2. Roll out linzertorte dough. Line tart pans. Par-bake blind.
3. Spread jam on linzertorte bases; arrange plums in pattern. Pour custard over plums; sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake at 350°F until golden-brown. Reduce heat to 300°F; bake until custard sets, approximately 15 minutes. Cool.
4. Slice. Serve with champagne/lemon sabayon sauce.

LINZERTORTE DOUGH

12 oz. butter
18 oz. granulated sugar
18 oz. hazelnut flour
20 oz. all-purpose flour or 50/50 bread/
cake flour
½ oz. cinnamon
1½ t. lemon zest
1 T. vanilla extract
½ t. salt
4 eggs

Method: Cream butter and sugar together just until smooth. Add hazelnut flour, all-purpose flour, cinnamon, lemon zest, vanilla extract, salt and eggs; mix until smooth. Chill until firm.

CHAMPAGNE/LEMON SABAYON SAUCE

½ cup champagne
2 T. lemon juice
½ t. lemon zest
½ cup granulated sugar
4 egg yolks
½ cup whipped cream (soft
peaks), optional

Method: Over bain marie in stainless-steel bowl, whisk champagne, lemon juice, lemon zest, sugar and egg yolks until cooked to 160°F. Serve warm, or chill over ice until room temperature. Fold in whipped cream, if desired.

was found in an Austrian abbey that dates back to 1653. The linzertorte's modern version is a hazelnut crust filled with raspberry jam. The tart, with its rich hazelnut dough, can be re-engineered into a more sophisticated dessert when the blind-baked crust is filled with plums, raspberry/current jam and a simple Alsatian-style egg custard before baking again. It is served warm with lemon/champagne sabayon and Merlot/blackberry gastrique.

Tarts are also sometimes called flans, and can be made in large sizes to be cut into servings or in small bite-size portions called tartelettes. Originally, large tarts were made in rings that could be fluted or straight-sided. Today, tarts are made in many different sizes and shapes, including rectangular and sheet-pan sizes, to meet the needs of large banquet-style functions.

FILL 'ER UP

Tarts are prepared with pastry doughs such as pâte brisée, pâte sablée and pâte sucrée that are also commonly made with almonds or pine nuts. Fillings can range from pastry cream, often used in tarte aux fruits, to a vast array of others, such as frangipane, ganache, custard and various citrus curds.

Belinda Leong, co-owner of B Patisserie in San Francisco, makes a roasted-apricot tart filled with vanilla pastry cream garnished with almond streusel. She learned much about tarts while doing a stage with Pierre Hermé in Paris. He would create a weekly themed tart that featured many of his signature flavors.

PASTRY ARTS tantalizing



BLUEBERRY/LIME BAKEWELL TART

William Racin, CEPC, Pastry Chef
The Duquesne Club, Pittsburgh

YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

9.5 oz. unsalted butter, room temperature, divided
5.25 oz. powdered sugar
1 vanilla bean, split, seeds removed
5 oz. whole eggs, room temperature, divided
13 oz. pastry flour, sifted
12.75 oz. granulated sugar, divided
4 g. apple pectin
13.5 oz. blueberry puree
2 oz. glucose syrup
1 oz. lime juice
1 lime, zested, zest finely minced
2 g. sea salt
1 g. vanilla extract
1.25 oz. egg whites, room temperature
3.5 oz. almond flour, sifted
0.6 oz. all-purpose flour, sifted
Egg wash, as needed

1. Using paddle attachment, lightly cream together 5.25 oz. butter, powdered sugar and vanilla bean flesh.

Add 3 oz. whole eggs, 1 oz. at a time, scraping well after each addition. Add pastry flour; mix just until absorbed (do not overmix). Wrap dough tightly; refrigerate for 2 hours. Roll dough $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch thick. Line 8 (3.5-inch) tart shells; dock dough lightly with fork. Blind-bake in 350°F oven for 8-10 minutes. Roll dough scraps $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch thick. Cut $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch strips; arrange in lattice pattern. Refrigerate lattice sheet until firm. Cut 8 (3.25-inch) circles; reserve.

2. Whisk together 10.5 oz. granulated sugar and pectin. In 2-quart stainless-steel saucepot, whisk together sugar/pectin, blueberry puree, glucose syrup and lime juice; cook to 220°F. Cool over ice bath until reaches 100°F. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. jam in bottom of each tart.

3. In 5-quart stand mixer with paddle attachment, cream together remaining 4.25 oz. butter, remaining 2.25 oz. granulated sugar, lime zest and sea salt. Combine vanilla extract, egg whites and remaining 2 oz. whole eggs; add in three phases, scraping well after each addition. Add almond flour and all-purpose flour; mix just until combined.



4. Pipe 1.75 oz. filling into each prebaked tart shell, covering jam completely. Place lattice tops over filling; press gently to ensure a good bond. Spray tops of tarts with egg wash. Bake at 360°F for 25 minutes or until golden-brown.

CLASSIC TARTE TATIN

From Flavorful: 150 Irresistible
Desserts in All-Time Favorite Flavors
(Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015), by
Tish Boyle

YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

1 sheet puff pastry
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsalted butter, cut
in tablespoons
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup granulated sugar
4 large apples, peeled, cored,
quartered lengthwise
 $\frac{1}{2}$ t. finely grated lemon zest
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pistachios, chopped
Rum raisin or vanilla ice cream,
or sweetened whipped cream

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. On lightly floured work surface, roll dough out $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thick. With pastry wheel or

paring knife, using a plate as guide, cut circle 1 inch larger than skillet's diameter. Transfer to baking sheet lined with waxed or parchment paper. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate.

2. In $9\frac{1}{2}$ - or 10-inch cast-iron skillet or tarte Tatin pan, melt butter over medium-low heat. Remove pan from heat; sprinkle sugar over butter, stirring to combine. Add cut-side-up apple quarters in concentric circles to cover pan bottom. Cook over medium-high heat until sugar mixture caramelizes and turns golden-brown, 6-7 minutes. Remove pan from heat; cool for 5 minutes.

3. Sprinkle lemon zest over apples. Place dough circle on top, tucking edges down between side of pan and apples. Place pan on baking sheet; bake for 25-30 minutes, until dough has risen and is golden-brown. Cool for 5 minutes.

4. Place large rimmed cake plate upside-down on top of pan. Holding pan and plate together, invert; remove pan. Sprinkle tart with chopped pistachios. Serve warm slices topped with ice cream or whipped cream.

Leong's tart, which could be classified as a tarte aux fruits, always sells out when she offers it in her shop.

Frangipane, most notably used in the classic tarte Bourdaloue combined with poached pears or peaches, was named after Cesare Frangipani, an Italian living in Paris during the reign of Louis XIII. The almond cream filling is used in many tarts and desserts, and in almond tartelettes, as well. Frangipane can also be layered with orange marmalade in a pâte sucrée tart base, and, after baking, topped with pastry cream and apricot-glazed fruit for yet another presentation of the classic tarte aux fruits.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Some creative pastry chefs are stretching the basic method for building tarts by developing modern multilayered tarts with exotic flavors, such as in the kalea-spiced caramel lacquered pineapple tart by Nathaniel Reid, pastry chef/owner of Nathaniel Reid Bakery, St. Louis.

In his tart version, Reid braises planks of pineapple in passion fruit juice and banana puree with cinnamon, cloves, rum, vanilla and brown sugar. The concept for the tart came from his desire to transform the flavors from one of his signature plated desserts into a tart for sale in his pastry shop. He created the original plated dessert for the Make a Wish Foundation's event held in Tokyo in 2010.

Because of the time-tested, simple procedures used to create tarts, along with the overall familiarity of the dessert, contemporary tarts such as Reid's will continue to be developed by creative pastry chefs. Traditional, re-engineered or modern contemporary tarts with their history and popularity will always spark the imagination of creative pastry chefs who present them artfully in both sweet and savory forms. ■

DANIEL PLISKA, CEC, AAC, IS EXECUTIVE CHEF OF THE UNIVERSITY CLUB OF MU, COLUMBIA, MISSOURI, AND AUTHOR OF PASTRY & DESSERT TECHNIQUES (AMERICAN TECHNICAL PUBLISHERS, 2014). HE WRITES THE BLOG CHEFPLISKA.WORDPRESS.COM.