

Lemon meringue cheese cake



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This tart is fabulously yummy.

Position the oven rack in the lower third of the oven and heat oven to 160 deg C

Ingredients for Base

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ packets of Tennis biscuits (also great with ginger biscuits)

125 g butter, melted

Method

Crush biscuits by hand or place them in a food processor. Add the melted butter and mix well.

Press into a 20 cm spring-form pan lining the base and the sides with the biscuits.

Ingredients for filling

2 pkt (500 grams in total) Philadelphia cream cheese (or any other firm cream cheese)

2 tins condensed milk (sweetened)

5 large eggs separated

$\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice (I use $\frac{3}{4}$ cup as we love a slight tang)

4 teaspoons grated lemon rind, grate this before you squeeze out the lemons

Ingredients for the meringue

5 large egg whites at room temperature

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup castor sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cream of tartar

1 teaspoon cornflour MAIZENA

Method

Place the cream cheese in your food processor and beat till smooth.

Alternatively you can beat the cream cheese with a wooden spoon till smooth.

Add the condensed milk, egg yolks, lemon rind and juice and beat well by hand or with the food processor till smooth. You do not want pieces of whole cream cheese in your filling.

Pour into prepared crumb base.

Make the meringue

Bring 3 cm of water to a simmer in a pot that will hold a bowl without letting it touch the water.

Reduce the heat to low (I switch it off).

Put the egg whites in the bowl off the heat and whisk preferably with a balloon whisk while adding the sugar about 2 Tablespoons at a time, whisking for about 10 seconds between additions. The secret is to dissolve the sugar in the egg white.

Put the bowl over the pot with the hot water and whisk gently but constantly (you are not trying to incorporate air, you just want to keep the egg whites moving so they don't cook) until the white is warm to the touch (it should feel as warm as a babies bottle) this can take 2 – 4 minutes, rub the whites between your fingertips – you should feel no grit between your fingers.

When the sugar is totally dissolved add the cream of tartar and cornflour Maizena beat with an electric whisk, gradually increasing the speed from low to medium high for the course of 4 minutes. The egg whites must be thick; glossy with medium-

firm peaks (they should hold their shape but curl at their tips.

Use a spoon and drop some of the meringue in mounds around the edge of the filling.

With the back of the spoon gently spread the dollops of meringue over the entire surface of the filling and all the way to the crust's edge. It is essential that all the filling be completely covered by the meringue, without any air pockets. The meringue must be anchored to the rim of the crust.

Scoop the rest of the meringue on top and press with the back of the spoon to eliminate any air pockets but do not deflate the meringue. Make decorative peaks with the back of the spoon.

Bake the tart for 30 minutes on the lower third shelf of the oven that has been preheated to 160 deg C.

Switch the oven off and open the door slightly, leave the tart in the oven for 10 minutes to cool down.

Remove the tart from the oven and allow it to cool down to room temperature, place in the fridge for at least 4 hours to chill and for the cheese to firm up