

Autumnal Tart

Serves 8

Ingredients

1 pinch/20-30 strands saffron, crushed	3 tbsp runny honey
2 tbsp hot water	75g/3oz/½ cup raisins or sultanas
1 x quantity sweet saffron pastry (see below)	75g/3oz/½ cup dried figs, roughly chopped
2-3 eating apples (at least 225g in total weight)	1 egg, beaten, (to glaze the tart)
1-2 pears (at least 225g in total weight)	150ml double cream to serve
1½ tsp powder douce or mixed spice	

Method

Infuse the saffron in the hot water.

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Grease a 23cm/9in loose bottomed flan tin. Roll out two thirds of the pastry then use it to line the tin. The remaining third can be used to create a lattice for the top of the pie.

Peel and core the apples and pears. Chop into small pieces then place into a large bowl. Mix with the saffron water, spice, honey, raisins and figs. Spoon into the pastry case.

Roll out the remaining pastry and create a lattice for the top of the tart by either cutting strips and arranging them on top of the tart or using a special lattice cutter. Trim away any excess pastry then brush with beaten egg.

Bake in the oven for 35-40 minutes until the pastry is golden brown. Serve warm or cold with cream or vanilla ice cream.

Ingredients for Saffron Short Crust Pastry – Makes 500g

250g/9oz/2 cups plain flour
3 tbsp icing sugar
125g/4½ oz/½ cup cold unsalted butter cubed plus extra for greasing
1 egg
1-2 pinches/20-60 saffron strands soaked in 4 tbsp hot water then allowed to cool completely

Method

Sieve the flour and icing sugar into a bowl. Rub in the butter until the mixture resembles bread-crumbs. Add the egg and 2-3 tablespoons of the saffron infusion to bind the pastry (add a little more of the saffron infusion if necessary). Alternatively, blitz the flour, icing sugar and butter in a food processor then add the egg and 2-3 tablespoons of the saffron infusion (again adding more of the saffron infusion if necessary). Form the dough into a ball, cover and refrigerate for at least one hour.