

Rustic East European Rhubarb Tart

When spring is in full swing, enjoy this recipe from my family, showcasing first-of-the-season rhubarb. Try it and you won't be disappointed.

For the crust:

- 1½ cups flour
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- ¾ cup butter, chilled
- 4 tbsp very cold water

For the filling:

- 5 cups chopped rhubarb
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp butter
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

Egg wash for pastry:

One beaten egg, to be brushed over pastry, followed by a dusting of 1 Tbsp brown sugar.

1. Make the crust:

- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a food processor fitted with a steel blade (or by hand), combine the flour, salt and sugar. Pulse briefly to combine. Add the cold butter and process just until the butter is the size of peas, about 5 seconds. Sprinkle the ice water over the mixture and process just until moistened and very crumbly, about 5 seconds. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface and knead a few times, just until it comes together into a cohesive ball. Pat the dough into a disk. Flour your work surface again and dust the dough with flour, as well. Using a rolling pin, roll into a circle 8 to 10 inches in diameter, turning and adding more flour as necessary so the dough doesn't stick.
- Transfer the dough to the parchment-lined baking sheet and refrigerate while you prepare the filling. Go ahead and clean your work surface, because you'll roll the dough out further on the parchment paper.

2. Make the Filling: Cut the rhubarb into 1/4 inch pieces and place in a large bowl. Add the sugar, cinnamon, and cornstarch and let sit for 30 minutes. Note: if you like a sweeter tart add an additional 1/4 cup of sugar.

3. Roll out the crust:

- Take the dough from the fridge and slide the parchment paper onto the countertop. Roll the dough, directly on the parchment paper, into a 14-inch circle about 1/8 inch thick. It's fine if the edges are a little ragged.
- Place the parchment and dough back on the baking sheet – the pastry should curve up the lip of the pan.

4. Assemble the tart:

- Dust 1 tablespoon of flour evenly over the pastry. Arrange the rhubarb pieces to within 3 inches of the edge. Don't worry about making it look perfect! It doesn't make much difference in the end and you don't want the dough to get too warm.

- Fold the edges of the dough over the rhubarb in a free-form fashion, working your way around and creating pleats as you go. Patch up any tears by pinching a bit of dough from the edge.
 - Using a pastry brush, brush the pleated dough evenly with the beaten egg. Dust with 1 tablespoon of brown sugar and put the assembled tart in the fridge for 15 to 20 minutes.
5. Bake the tart:
- Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°F and set an oven rack in the center position.
 - Bake for 55 to 65 minutes, or until the rhubarb is tender and the crust is golden and cooked through. (It's okay if some of the juices leak from the tart onto the pan. The juices will burn on the pan but the tart should be fine -- just scrape any burnt bits away from the tart once it's baked.) Transfer the pan to a rack and let cool.
6. When the tart is cool serve with a scoop of French vanilla ice cream. Enjoy!