

Lemon Meringue Pie

Classic lemon curd tart with toasted Italian meringue

Difficulty	Medium	Prep Time	40 minutes
Cook Time	30 minutes	Chilling Time	At least 5 hours
Servings	12	Pan Size	9 1/2-inch tart pan
Method	Oven and stovetop	Cuisine	British-inspired

Equipment

- 9 1/2-inch tart pan with removable bottom
- Rolling pin and parchment paper
- Pie weights, ceramic baking beans, or dried beans
- Heatproof bowl and saucepan
- Electric mixer or stand mixer
- Candy or instant-read thermometer
- Piping bag and decorative tip
- Kitchen torch

Ingredients

For the Shortcrust Pastry

- 1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled (200 g)
- 7 tablespoons unsalted butter, cold and cut into cubes (100 g)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar (100 g)
- 1 large egg
- Finely grated zest of 1/2 lemon
- 1 pinch salt

For the Lemon Curd

- 3 lemons, zest and juice
- 1 cup granulated sugar (200 g)
- 7 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces (100 g)
- 1/4 cup cornstarch (30 g)
- 3 large eggs
- 1 large egg yolk

For the Italian Meringue

- 1/2 cup egg whites, about 4 large egg whites (125 g)
- 1 cup granulated sugar, divided (200 g)
- 3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon water (50 g)

Instructions

1. Prepare the Shortcrust Pastry

1. Place the flour in a large bowl. Add the cold butter and rub it into the flour with your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
2. Add the sugar, salt, lemon zest, and egg. Mix with a fork, then knead gently by hand just until a smooth dough forms.
3. Shape the dough into a flat disk, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

2. Shape and Blind-Bake the Tart Shell

1. Preheat the oven to 340°F conventional or 320°F convection. Grease and flour a 9 1/2-inch tart pan with a removable bottom.
2. Roll the chilled dough between two lightly floured sheets of parchment paper. Transfer it to the pan and press it gently into the bottom and sides.
3. Fold any excess dough inward to strengthen the edges. Prick the bottom all over with a fork.
4. Refrigerate the lined tart pan for 30 minutes.
5. Cover the pastry with parchment paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake at 340°F for 15 minutes.
6. Remove the parchment and weights. Reduce the oven temperature to 320°F and bake for another 15 minutes, or until lightly golden.
7. Cool completely in the pan, then transfer the shell to a serving plate.

3. Prepare the Lemon Curd

1. Finely grate the lemon zest and squeeze the juice into a bowl.
2. Sift the cornstarch into the lemon juice and whisk until smooth.
3. Place the butter in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of gently simmering water. Melt slowly, then stir in the sugar.
4. Lightly beat the eggs and egg yolk. Add them to the butter mixture together with the lemon juice mixture and zest.
5. Cook over the double boiler for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently, until the curd thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon.
6. Let the curd cool slightly, then pour it into the cooled tart shell and smooth the surface.
7. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or preferably overnight.

4. Prepare the Italian Meringue

1. Place the egg whites in a clean, grease-free mixer bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of the sugar, about 25 g, and begin whipping on low speed.
2. Place the water and remaining sugar, about 175 g, in a small saucepan. Heat over medium-high heat without stirring.
3. When the syrup reaches 244°F, increase the mixer speed to high.
4. When the syrup reaches 250°F, remove it from the heat. With the mixer running, carefully pour in half the syrup, then add the rest in a thin, steady stream down the side of the bowl.
5. Continue whipping for about 10 minutes, until the meringue is thick, glossy, stable, and the bowl has cooled to room temperature.

5. Assemble and Finish

1. Transfer the meringue to a piping bag fitted with a Saint-Honoré, star, or round tip.
2. Pipe the meringue over the chilled lemon filling, beginning at the outer edge and working toward the center.

3. Create waves, swirls, or raised peaks.
4. Lightly toast the meringue with a kitchen torch until the raised areas are golden brown.
5. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

No-Torch Method

Place the finished pie under the oven broiler for 2 to 3 minutes, watching constantly. Remove it as soon as the raised areas become lightly golden.

Storage

Store covered in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. For the best texture and appearance, serve within 24 to 48 hours. Freezing is not recommended.

Make-Ahead Tip

Day 1: prepare and bake the tart shell, make the lemon curd, fill the crust, and refrigerate overnight. Day 2: prepare the Italian meringue, decorate, toast, and chill until serving.

Nutrition

Approximately 390 calories per serving. Nutritional values are estimates and may vary.