Simple food

Ricotta and tomato tart



The beauty of late summer, aside from a welcome relief from constant humidity and long, hot, sweaty nights, is the abundance of tomatoes that ripen almost before our eyes. There are a great variety of tomatoes available now – yellow pear tomatoes, vine ripened red tomatoes, green heritage varieties, cherry tomatoes and luscious roma tomatoes. I have used a number of varieties in this tart that brings together crisp pastry, creamy, herbed ricotta and gently roasted tomatoes. It's a delicious light lunch for four served with a green salad and some chewy bread. I like to pile the top of the tart with fresh basil leaves as I serve it, warm rather than piping hot. I have so much basil this time of the year it doesn't even feel like a luxurious thing to do this.

1 1/2 sheets of frozen butter puff pastry
250 g soft ricotta cheese
2 tablespoons fresh herbs, finely chopped (any combination of chives, parsley, oregano, basil and thyme that you have to hand)
40 g finely grated parmesan cheese
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
3 large, ripe red tomatoes, or 250 -300 g mixed tomatoes
a handful of fresh basil, to serve

Preheat oven to 200 C. In a medium bowl mix together the ricotta, fresh herbs, and parmesan, and season well with salt and pepper. Place the full sheet of pastry on a sheet of

silicon baking paper on a flat baking tray. Cut the half sheet of pastry into 4 strips and place around the edges of the full sheet of pastry, pressing down lightly to join them together. Use a sharp knife to make some decorative diagonal marks on the pastry edges. Carefully spread the ricotta filling onto the pastry, right up to the edges. Thickly slice the tomatoes, or if using a mixture of tomatoes slice small ones lengthwise and round tomatoes into slices and place all over the ricotta filling, quite close together. Bake in the oven for about 30 minutes, until the pastry is golden brown and the ricotta filling lightly browning around the edges. serve warm with a salad and fresh, crusty bread.



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