

ALMOND JOY CHOCOLATE TART

INGREDIENTS

for the tart shell

- 1 1/4 sticks unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 3/4 cup confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 1/4 cup ground blanched almonds (1/4 cup of these were toasted before I ground them)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

for the filling

- 12 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
- 1 cup heavy cream, plus 1 tablespoon
- 2 large egg yolks, at room temperature
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup shredded sweetened coconut, toasted and cooled
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds, toasted and cooled
- Optional: bittersweet chocolate shavings to decorate the top of the tart

DIRECTIONS

In the work bowl of a stand mixer, using the paddle attachment, beat the butter until creamy, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary. Add the confectioners' sugar and process to blend well. Add the ground almonds, salt, and vanilla and continue to process until smooth, scraping the bowl as necessary. Lightly stir the egg with a fork and, with the mixer running, add it to the bowl; process for a few seconds to blend. Finally, add the flour and process until the mixture just starts to come together. When the dough forms moist curds and clumps and then starts to form a ball, stop as you don't want to overwork it. The dough will be very soft, and that's just as it should be. Gather the dough into a ball and wrap in plastic wrap. Allow the dough to rest in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours.

Prepare the tart pan with baking spray. This dough can be very temperamental is the amount of butter, so working quickly, and rolling between two sheets of wax paper, roll out the crust. Turn the dough over often so that you can roll it out on both sides. Place in the prepared tart pan and chill for at least 30 minutes in the freezer.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line the crust with parchment paper or foil and fill with pie weights. Bake the crust for 25 minutes, or until very lightly colored. Remove the parchment and beans and bake the crust for another 12-14 minutes, or until golden. Transfer to a rack to cool.

For the filling, put the chocolate in a heatproof bowl. In a small bowl, beat 1 tablespoon of the heavy cream with the egg yolks just until the eggs are liquid. Pour 1 cup of the heavy cream into a saucepan, add the vanilla extract, whisk together, and bring the mixture to a full boil over medium-low heat. Then pour the hot cream over the chocolate. Wait for about 30 seconds, then, working with a whisk, gently blend the cream into the chocolate. Still whisking delicately, incorporate the yolks, followed by the butter. Pour the ganache into the crust. Jiggle the crust a bit to even out the ganache, and leave the tart on the counter until the filling sets, about 20 minutes, depending on the temperature of your kitchen.

Combine the coconut and sliced almonds in a small bowl. Once the filling is mostly set, sprinkle with the almond and coconut mixture. If adding chocolate shavings, now is the time to do it.

Note: this tart should be served at room temperature. You can refrigerate it, however leave it on the counter for a couple of hours (at least two) before serving.