

Redcurrant Portuguese Custard Tarts



Makes 12

Prep 10 mins

Cooking 30 mins

Challenge

Ingredients

For the pastry cases

15g melted butter or oil for greasing
2 tbsp plain flour, for dusting
320g pre-rolled all-butter puff pastry

For the sugar syrup

1 orange
200g granulated or caster sugar
100g water
1 star anise
1 cinnamon stick

For the custard

2 tbsp corn flour
250ml whole milk
4 large egg yolks
1 tsp vanilla paste
A few redcurrants

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/gas mark 6. Brush the inside of a 12-hole cupcake tin with a little butter or oil, then dust with flour & shake off the excess.
2. Using a 10cm-round cookie cutter, cut out discs of pastry and push down into the holes. They will not come up to the full height of the tins. You should get about 8 discs from the first sheet of pastry. Stack the off cuts on top of each other (rather than just squishing together, which would destroy the layers of butter), roll out to 3mm thick and cut out the remaining 4 rings. Place the pastry tin in a freezer for 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, make the sugar syrup. Use a potato peeler to cut strips of zest from the orange. Place in a small saucepan with the sugar, water, star anise and cinnamon stick. Heat gently at first until all the sugar is dissolved, then turn the heat up and boil the syrup until it reaches 105C on a sugar thermometer. Once cooled, discard the cinnamon stick, anise and orange peel.
4. Mix together the corn flour with a little milk to form a smooth paste. Stir this paste gradually into the remaining milk, beaten egg yolks and vanilla paste. Cook in a saucepan on a low/medium heat for about 8 minutes until the custard has thickened. Add the sugar syrup and allow to cool at room temperature.
5. Pour the custard into the pastry cases, aiming to fill to a few millimetres below the rim. Sprinkle 4 or 5 redcurrants in each, then place in the oven for 16-20 minutes. They are ready when the custard is billowing up and dark brown spots of caramelisation appear on the surface.