

THE CANTEEN

St. Jude Curd and Chard Tart

By Nicola Hordern.

Rick Stein and the production team wanted us to cook something which reflected the food we regularly serve at The Canteen. It also needed to be vegetarian, which they knew we would be willing and able to accommodate. We only had a week's notice and so in the lead up to the filming I got on the phone to our regular producers to see what the best produce was available. This tart is the result of those phone calls. I am so grateful we have such an abundance of beautiful, sustainable, produce on our doorstep.

Our Suppliers

Chloe, Holly and Rachel of Real Veg CSA, part of the Wakelyns Agroforestry family, had some gorgeous rainbow chard (which you see on the film) along with an abundance of garlic which I had, a few days before, confited ready to add to any dishes that week (we love it in aioli). ES Burroughs, our milk supplier regularly delivers their delicious raw Jersey cream to us which we use for our desserts - it absolutely had to go into this tart. Bundles of beautiful flowering thyme, along with various salad leaves, and summer purslane were collected from head grower Bess at Maple Farm. On Friday morning I drove over to Ben at Fellows and collected more gorgeous salad leaves plus some sweet mangetout that none of us could resist snacking on!

We had some English Pecorino in stock that I had sourced from our local cheesemongers, Hamish Johnston. Julie and Blake at St Jude managed to supply some extra Cows' Curd which they make for us to order each week along with some whole St Jude cheeses that I tore apart and placed on top of the chard along with the curd that you see in the film.

The flour for the pastry was supplied by Hodmedods, from wholewheat grown at Rookery Farm, and which was milled for us by none other than Lindsay Wright, The Canteen's head chef. Shaun Pepper churned the cultured butter at Fen Farm.

Now it may seem strange to go into such detail - to list out all these ingredients, names, and places, but for us it sums up what The Canteen is about. It is important to us that we know our suppliers, we see the animals they care for, know the land they farm, and the people who grow and make the ingredients we use. These are our employers, our friends, our guardians of the environment and a special part of our community. We thank them all for their hard work and dedication.

Recipe

For the Pastry: (For a 30cm Tart, but can be scaled up or down)

- 350g wholemeal flour (substitute with your preferred flour for experimentation).
- 190g very cold, diced unsalted butter.
- 125g very cold water.
- Approximate tablespoon of picked thyme leaves.
- 35g grated hard cheese (e.g., English Pecorino, or similar)
- Extra flour for dusting.

For the Filling:

- 1 red onion finely chopped.
- 500g to 1kg chard or similar leafy greens.
- Approx. 2 tablespoons oil (e.g., sunflower, olive, or rapeseed).
- 5 whole eggs.
- 4 egg yolks (save whites for meringues or later use).
- 600ml double cream.
- 200g hard cheese (e.g., Pecorino, or similar).
- 200g cows' curd, ricotta, or crumbled feta.
- Salt and pepper to taste (I like lots of pepper not as much salt as cheese can be salty enough!)
- Optional: confit garlic, finely chopped herbs, or other flavourings.

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius (fan). Place a baking tray on the middle shelf, large enough to accommodate the tart case.

Pastry (best made the day before if possible):

- Rub together the cold butter and flour until the mixture resembles large breadcrumbs. Visible pieces of butter are fine as they add flakiness to the pastry when cooked.
- Add thyme, cheese, and water, then bring the mixture together until it forms a rough, non-sticky dough.
- Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface, press down, fold, and turn gently, repeating about 6 times until combined. You will need to work lightly and gently here.
- Shape the dough into a flattened ball, wrap in cling film, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, preferably overnight.

Filling:

- Separate chard leaves and stems, finely slice the stems, and wash them separately (you will be cooking the stems first, adding the leaves later).
- Heat oil in a large pot, add diced onion, cook gently until softened, then add chard stems and continue cooking until soft.
- Add chard leaves, cook until leaves are wilted, then drain excess juices (you can squeeze the mix gently if needed).
- Optionally add in some confit garlic, season with salt and pepper.
- Whisk together whole eggs and yolks and add to the chard, followed by the cream and hard cheese, mix well, and season with salt and pepper. (If you're happy to taste the raw egg mix, I would highly recommend tasting at this point. I use lots of pepper and less salt, because of the salty cheese. Remember that seasoning is more pronounced in a warm dish than a cold one).

- Take the lined tart case out of the fridge/freezer and fill with the chard, the curd or crumbled feta, distributing evenly across the tart. Next pour over the egg/cream/cheese mixture.

Baking:

- Place the tart on the hot baking tray in the oven, bake for 40-50 minutes until lightly browned with a gentle wobble in the centre.
- Keep an eye on the colour. If it browns too quickly, cover with foil. If it puffs or browns too much, reduce the heat to avoid forming too much of a crust.

Serving:

- Serve warm or cool, accompanied by new potatoes and salad. Ideal for picnics.

Notes:

1) Confit Garlic:

Confit garlic adds a rich, sweet flavour to dishes and is best prepared when you have an abundance of garlic bulbs. Begin by placing whole bulbs of garlic in a small, deep oven tray, ensuring the tray is at least as deep as the garlic is tall. Create a mixture of equal parts water and olive oil to cover the garlic bulbs. Add hard herbs such as thyme, sage, or rosemary for added depth of flavour.

Cover the tray with foil and preheat the oven to 100 degrees Celsius. Slowly cook the garlic until it is soft and yields slightly to the touch. It should develop a golden-brown colour during cooking but take care to prevent burning. The oil should barely ripple on the surface as an indicator of gentle cooking. Cooking times may vary depending on the size of the garlic bulbs and your oven, but it typically takes a few hours.

2) Blind Baking the Pastry Case:

While we don't blind bake the pastry case in our commercial kitchen due to the powerful ovens with consistent heat flow, you may prefer to do so for a perfectly crisp base. To blind bake, start by lining the chilled tart case with baking parchment.

Fill the lined case with baking beans (no need to use special ceramic ones, you can use dried pulses), using enough to weigh down the paper.

Bake the pastry case in the oven at 180 degrees Celsius for 15-20 minutes until it is dried and lightly coloured. Once baked, remove the paper and baking beans. Seal any cracks in the pastry by brushing with beaten egg, then return the case to the oven for 8-10 minutes until fully set. Your pastry case is now ready to be filled with the delicious chard and curd mixture.

Don't forget, you can also watch Nicola making the Tart on BBC iPlayer! Here's the link: [BBC iPlayer - Rick Stein's Food Stories Series 1 Episode 8: Suffolk](#)

We're thrilled to share a taste of The Canteen with you. Give it a go at home and share your creations with us on Instagram by tagging @thecanteensouthwold. We can't wait to see what you make!