

Sweet Goat Cheese Tart with Lemon Verbena Cream + Concord Grape Compote

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serves 8

for the tart:

- 1 sheet frozen all-butter puff pastry, slightly defrosted, i like DuFour brand)
- granulated sugar for sprinkling
- 2 eggs plus 1 egg yolk
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- zest from one lemon
- 1 splash of vanilla extract
- a large pinch of sea salt
- 2 8 oz. logs fresh plain chèvre (1 lb.)

for the lemon verbena cream:

- 1 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- leaves from 3-4 sprigs lemon verbena (watch the stems, they can make the cream taste bitter)
- confectioners sugar to taste

for the concord grape compote:

- 3 pints concord grapes (you don't really need that much but this is soooo good you'll be happy to have extra to use on everything ;-)
- juice of 1/2 lemon
- granulated cane sugar to taste
- 1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter

procedure:

in a small saucepan, warm the heavy whipping cream over medium low heat until just under boiling.

remove the saucepan from the heat, and stir in the lemon verbena leaves. let steep for 20 minutes. strain the heavy cream, discard the leaves, and place in the fridge to cool fully.

remove the concord grapes from their stems and place in a saucepan with a splash of water, the lemon juice and a couple of tablespoons of sugar. cook, stirring, over medium heat until the grapes separate from their skins and any seeds separate from the pulp. keep stirring

until everything is broken down and saucy, then push through a medium-mesh strainer – small enough to stop the seeds from going through, large enough to let the skins and pulp go through. put the grape mixture back in the pan, cooking a little more to reduce the mixture to a thick creamy consistency. taste for sweetness, adding a bit more sugar if desired. remove pan from the heat, stirring in the butter. set aside or refrigerate until ready to use. (if grape compote is too chunky, place in the bowl of a food processor while still warm before adding in the butter).

preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

unfold the puff pastry onto a half-sheet pan lined with parchment paper and score a 1/2-inch border around its edge. with a pastry brush, brush the border with a little water and sprinkle wet border with sugar. place sheet pan with pastry in freezer until fully chilled.

place chilled pastry in oven and bake for 30-ish minutes – you want the pastry to be golden brown, do not underbake. remove from oven to a rack to let cool.

turn the oven down to 325 degrees F.

in a medium bowl, combine eggs, egg yolk, heavy cream, lemon zest, vanilla and salt, whisking until smooth. add goat cheese and mix well.

remove the top layer of puff pastry inside the border, flattening the bottom layers of the cooked pastry down with your fingers in order to add the filling.

spread the goat cheese mixture evenly onto the pastry just inside the border.

bake until goat cheese mixture is set and just beginning to brown on top, about 35 minutes. let cool.

remove the lemon verbena-infused cream from the fridge, add confectioners sugar to taste, and whip until soft peaks form. do not overwhip!

cut the tart into 8 squares and serve with plops of lemon verbena cream and concord grape compote.