

Tourte de Blettes Negresco

Nice's traditional and most beloved dessert. This is a curious blend of apples, raisins, and spinach or Swiss chard (this is what is used in Nice) baked in a light pie. Although it may seem odd to you at first, it will probably become one of the staples for picnics and buffets. It can be eaten warm or cold. This recipe serves 8 people.

Pastry Ingredients & Preparation:

3 C Unbleached flour
2 Eggs, beaten
1/2 C Sweet butter, softened
1/2 C Lard
1/2 C Sugar
About 1 T Salt

Working quickly with the tips of your fingers, mix all the ingredients together on a well-floured board. Pound the stretch the dough away from you with the heel of your hand to be sure all ingredients are well blended. Shape the dough into a ball, cover with a clean cloth, and leave for 3 hours at room temperature.

Filling Ingredients & Preparation:

4 Large Golden Delicious Apples 3 T Raisins
2 T Dark rum
2 T White wine (Chenin Blanc)
1 C Cooked and thoroughly drained chopped Spinach (2 10 oz. pkg. frozen chopped spinach or 2 pounds fresh spinach)
4 T Pine nuts
1/2 C Confectioners' sugar
1/4 . 1/2 lb. Bland cheese, such as Gouda or a mild Cheddar, diced 2 Eggs, beaten
1 Lemon, rind, grated 1 Orange, rind, grated 2 T Currant jelly
3 T Confectioners' sugar

Peel the apples and cut two of them into small cubes. Put the raisins and rum in a pan and bring to a boil. Cook for 2 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 375 °.

In a large bowl, mix the spinach, raisins, chenin blanc, apple cubes, pine nuts, sugar, cheese, eggs, lemon and orange rind. Slice the remaining two apples. Divide the pastry into two unequal parts, the smallest being about a third of the larger amount. Roll the pastry as thin as you can. Butter the deep mold and spread the larger circle of dough in the bottom, molding it around to fit the bottom and sides. Prick it all over with a fork. Spread the currant jelly on the bottom and add the filling. Cover with the apples slices and then with the other small circle of dough. Fit together smoothly and cut off the excess dough. Prick the top crust with a fork and bake for 30 minutes, or until golden. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.