



Tarte Tatin



Legend has it that the tarte Tatin started life as a happy accident. At the Hotel Tatin in the small town of Lamotte-Beuvron in France, chef Stéphanie Tatin was so tired working at the stove one day that she completely overcooked the apple slices intended for a traditional apple pie. The guests were already seated at their tables and emergency action was required. She covered the apples in the pan with pastry and put everything, including the pan, into the oven. Once cooked, she turned out the tart onto a plate, served it up, and was surprised how much her guests enjoyed it.

A tarte Tatin always catches the eye on the table and yet is very easy to make: all you need is a few ingredients (nice apples, sugar, butter and puff pastry) you arrange in a round baking dish or cast-iron pan and cover with pastry. The only real challenge about the recipe is the fact you need to cook the apples in the sugar and butter for exactly the right amount of time so that they release all their sweetness but at the same time keep their shape and don't disintegrate when cooking. Our goal is to accomplish in our kitchens today what an overtired chef achieved back then.

A tarte Tatin is traditionally made with apples. You first need to caramelize them in butter and sugar in a cast-iron pan until amber in colour (7 apples, sliced, in 225g of sugar and 115g of butter) before covering them with puff pastry or a cake dough and then baking the tart in the oven for 25 to 35 minutes at 190°C. Leave to cool for a short time but turn it out onto a plate while still hot so that the tart doesn't stick to the



pan. Add some vanilla ice cream or crème fraîche and you have a wonderful dessert! You can use pears instead of apples, if you have these handy, and you can even use the same recipe for bananas, the first rhubarb of the season or firm pears or apricots.

Or how about surprising your guests with a vegetable tarte Tatin? Rather than apples, use shallots seasoned with thyme and sugar for a sweet-sour taste. Carrots also caramelize well, and you can even use beetroot in your tart, topped off on the table with some goat's cheese. The first cherry tomatoes of the season also develop their sunny flavour in the warmth of the oven.

You can create a sweet-savoury flavour in your tarte Tatin using sweet onions with earthy potatoes. Pre-heat the oven to 220°C. Grease a spring-form pan (24cm in diameter) with butter. Peel two white onions and cut into slices ½ to 1 cm thick. Spread the onion slices evenly onto the base of the spring-form pan. Peel 5 medium-sized, floury potatoes, cut into slices 2-3mm thick with a vegetable slicer and arrange them like roof tiles on top of the onions. Chop up 2-3 spring onions and sprinkle on top. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper and cover with puff pastry (approx. 270g) rolled into a circle. Use a spoon to press the edges of the pastry into the gap between the filling and rim of the pan so that the ingredients are well packed in. Bake for 25-30 minutes. The puff pastry should be nice and crispy at the end. Turn out onto a large plate and serve hot with some crème fraîche, reduced Balsamic vinegar and a green salad. And while you're enjoying the first springtime lunch of the season, take a quiet moment to thank the overtired chef whose fortunate error created a wonderful new dish.