

My Mother's Famous Linzertorte

When I turned 21, my mother Ruth Schachter (nee Nisse) sent me a file of her favourite recipes that she had carefully typed out on her manual typewriter. I treasure and still have this lovely collection. In it, there were three versions of this wonderful European dessert: a nut crusted, lattice-topped tart filled with raspberry jam. I eventually combined all three recipes and came up with one that even my mother admits is tops. My daughter Ruthie made this for a high school event – to rave reviews. Serve in small wedges – this is rich and a little goes a long way – with a spoonful of vanilla ice cream, thickened yogurt or whipped cream. It is a winner!

1 ¼ cups (6 oz/175 g) whole unblanched almonds, skins on
¾ cup butter, at room temperature
½ cup granulated sugar
2 egg yolks (reserve 1 white)
1 tsp grated lemon rind
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tbsp cocoa powder
½ tsp ground cinnamon
Pinch ground cloves
About 1 cup good-quality raspberry jam
Icing sugar for dusting

In food processor, chop almonds, pulsing with on/off motion, until they resemble fine crumbs.

In large bowl, using electric mixer, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add egg yolks, lemon rind and lemon juice. Beat until smooth.

In separate bowl, combine flour, cocoa, cinnamon, cloves and chopped almonds. Stir into butter mixture to form soft dough. Gather dough into ball, wrap well in plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 1 hour or overnight. (If chilling overnight, let soften at room temperature 30 min. before using.)

With floured hands, evenly pat two-thirds of dough onto bottom and about 1 ¼ inches up sides of a
9 inch (23 cm) springform pan or fluted flan ring with removable bottom.

Carefully spread jam over dough.

On floured surface, roll remaining dough into oval 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick. Cut into strips 1 inch wide and arrange in lattice on top of jam, pressing edges into edge of torte.

In small bowl, lightly beat reserved egg white. Brush strips and edges of torte with egg white.

Bake in preheated 350°F oven about 45 minutes or until pastry is well browned and jam is bubbling. Cool completely in pan on rack. Remove sides. Dust with icing sugar by rubbing through sieve with spoon.

Makes 10 servings.