

Tarte Tatin

Between the Layers/Anne Byrn

This is one of those recipes you get better at with practice. Everyone you bake it for will delight in your progress, but they might selfishly tell you that you haven't quite gotten it right and to bake them another. I, frankly, have never tasted a bad Tarte Tatin.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Prep: 40 to 45 minutes

Bake: 25 to 30 minutes

3 pounds tart apples such as Granny Smith, peeled, quartered, and cored

3/4 cup granulated sugar

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 9-inch pie crust, frozen and thawed or see recipe below

1. Place the apples in a 12-inch cast iron skillet over low heat. Gradually add the sugar, and let the apples cook, stirring every so often, until they are caramelized, about 20 to 25 minutes. About 5 minutes into the cooking, add 2 tablespoons of the butter. Add the rest of the butter after 10 minutes of cooking. The apples should develop a golden brown color. Turn off the heat and set the apples aside.
2. Place a rack in the center of the oven, and preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Roll out the pie crust to a 1/3-inch thickness, and cut it into 10-inch circle.
3. Arrange the apples in the bottom of a 10-inch cast iron skillet, placing the apples rounded-side down in a concentric circle. Lay the circle of dough on top of the apples, tucking the edges under so the pastry fits in the skillet. Prick the top of the pastry with a fork.
4. Place the skillet in the oven, and bake until the pastry turns lightly browned, about 25 to 30 minutes. Remove the skillet from the oven. Run a knife around the edges. Immediately place a large, flat platter or baking sheet on top of the skillet. Invert the hot skillet and let the tart fall onto the pan, and replace any stuck apples. Slice and serve warm.

Easy Food Processor Pie Crust: Place 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, a pinch of salt, and a pinch of sugar in the processor and pulse to combine. Cut a stick (4 ounces) of cold unsalted butter into 1/2-inch cubes and distribute them on top of the flour. Pulse until the mixture looks like peas. Add 3 tablespoons ice water and pulse again until the dough forms a ball. Press the dough flat and chill briefly, then roll on a floured surface as the recipe instructs. Makes one 9-inch crust.

