

## **Lemon tart –serves 8**

The secret of a good lemon tart is that the centre should be firm and clear, and the pastry light and sweet. You can't serve it immediately after it's cooked, because the filling will be too runny. Let it rest and set for at least an hour. It will still be warm and at it's best – and it will also taste excellent the next day.

*For the flan case:*

500g plain flour  
175g icing sugar  
250g unsalted butter, diced  
Grated zest of 1 lemon  
Grains from 1 vanilla pod  
1½ eggs  
50g sieved icing sugar to dust

*For the filling:*

9 eggs  
400g caster sugar  
5 lemons (zest of 2 and juice of all 5)  
250ml double cream

*Make the flan case as follows:* Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Sieve the flour and icing sugar and rub in the butter. Make a well in the flour mixture and add the lemon zest and vanilla grains. Beat the eggs and add to the well. Knead the mixture with your fingers quickly but very thoroughly until smooth, then wrap in cling film and leave to cool in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface to size - just large enough to fill your flat tin, which should be 20cm in diameter and 3.75cm deep with a removable base.

Grease the tin and fold the dough into it, gently easing it into the corners, and ensuring an overhang of no less than 1cm.

Line the flan with greaseproof paper and fill with enough dry baking beans or lentils to ensure the sides as well as the base are weighted. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes.

Remove the beans and greaseproof paper, and trim the overhang. Return the flan to the oven for another 10 minutes.

*Make the lemon filling as follows:* In a large bowl, whisk the eggs with the caster sugar and lemon zest. When the mixture is smooth, stir in the lemon juice and then fold in the cream. Continue to whisk until all the ingredients are thoroughly amalgamated, and remove and froth from the top.