

Chocolate, quince and liquorice tart

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Chocolate fiends will love this rich tart. The addition of poached quinces and herbal tones of liquorice makes it a dessert to remember.

Ingredients (serves 4)

Pastry

- 190 g unsalted butter, softened
- 190 g caster (or coconut) sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 225 g plain flour (or [almond](#) meal)
- 75 g (+ extra) [cacao](#) powder

Filling

- 4 small or 1 kg fresh quinces, peeled, quartered and cored
- 1 litre apple juice
- 300 g coconut sugar
- 2 lemons, juiced
- 300 ml cream

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- 380 g dark [chocolate](#)
- ¼ tsp aniseed essence
- 100 g soft liquorice, cut into small pieces

Method

To poach the quinces, heat the apple juice, coconut sugar and lemon juice in a wide, heavy-based saucepan, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Place the quince quarters in the syrup, adding water if necessary to ensure the liquid covers the fruit, and cover with a piece of baking paper. Weigh the quinces down with a plate to keep them submerged and simmer very gently with the lid on for one hour, until the quinces have softened. Remove the lid, plate and baking paper and keep simmering for a further 30 minutes to reduce the syrup and deepen the pale pink colour of the quinces. Remove the quinces with a slotted spoon and allow to cool before slicing thickly.

To make the [pastry](#), cream the butter and sugar in an electric mixer until pale and then beat in the vanilla extract. Sift the flour and cacao together and blend into the butter mixture until just incorporated. Grease a 24 cm loose-bottomed tart tin and gently press the dough over the base and up the sides to create an even tart base. Rest in the refrigerator for a minimum of one hour. Preheat oven to 180°C and bake the pastry base for 10 to 15 minutes. If the sides collapse, press the pastry gently back into place while still warm. Leave to cool.

To make the filling, bring the cream to a gentle simmer in a saucepan, turn the heat off and add the chocolate. Stir until smooth and then stir through the aniseed essence. Leave to cool. Evenly lay the quince slices over the chocolate pastry base before scattering over the soft liquorice pieces. Pour over the chocolate filling and gently tap the tart to remove any air bubbles and ensure the filling is even. Allow to set on an even surface and in a cool place for four hours before serving.

Recipe and images from *Food of the Southern Forests* by [Sophie Zalokar](#)

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