

U3a Cookery 23rd February 2024

Tuna, Broccoli, Pasta Bake plus Apricot Portuguese Tarts.

Apricot Portuguese Tarts makes 10

Ingredients

For the custard

250ml/9fl oz milk
100ml/3½fl oz double cream
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 large free-range egg, plus 2 egg yolks
115g/2½oz caster sugar
4 tsp cornflour

For the tarts

butter, for greasing
plain flour, for dusting
320g ready-rolled puff pastry
½ x 400g tin apricots, drained and sliced
3 tbsp apricot jam, melted, to glaze

Method

1. To make the custard, add the milk, cream and vanilla to a saucepan. Place over medium heat until hand hot. Meanwhile, break the whole egg into a heatproof bowl, add the egg yolks, sugar and cornflour and whisk by hand until combined. Pour in the hot milk and cream mixture and whisk again until smooth.
2. Pour the custard back into the saucepan. Place over a medium heat and whisk to a thick custard consistency. Be careful not to overheat. Spoon into a bowl and cover with a piece of cling film lightly touching the surface of the custard. Set aside and allow to cool completely at room temperature.
3. Dust your worktop with a little flour. Roll the pastry out and using a 10cm/4in round cutter, cut the pastry to produce 10 discs. Put the rounds in the muffin tin, pressing down firmly and up the sides of the tin. Prick the bases with a fork.
4. Spoon the cold custard into the pastry cases and top with the apricot slices. Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes, if you have time. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6.
5. Bake for about 25–30 minutes, until the pastry is golden and the custard is set. Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly.
6. Brush the melted jam over the tops of the tarts to serve.

Tuna, Broccoli & Pasta Bake Serves 4-6

Ingredients

250g/9oz small frozen or fresh broccoli florets

200g /7oz dried pasta

40g/1½oz butter

40g/1½oz plain flour

600ml/20fl oz. semi-skimmed milk

Small tsp course-grained mustard

75g/2½oz mature cheddar

salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 x 185g tinned tuna in water or brine, drained

2 firm, ripe tomatoes, sliced (optional)

Method

Half-fill a large saucepan with water and bring it to a boil. Add the pasta, return the water to the boil and cook according to the packet instructions until just tender. Just before the end of the cooking time, add the frozen broccoli florets to the pan and cook with the pasta for the final 2-3 minutes, until just tender.

Meanwhile, heat the butter, flour and milk in a saucepan over medium heat until the mixture is just bubbling, whisking constantly with a balloon whisk until smooth and thickened to a roux

Continue to cook the roux for a further 2-3 minutes, stirring constantly until it has thickened enough to coat the back of a spoon. Stir in half of the cheese until melted, then season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Preheat the grill to its highest setting.

Drain the pasta and broccoli in a large colander and transfer to a pre-warmed shallow ovenproof dish (a lasagne dish is ideal). Flake the tuna on top of the pasta and broccoli.

Pour the cheese sauce over the pasta mixture, then top with the sliced tomatoes, if using. Sprinkle over the remaining cheese.

Place the pasta bake under the hot grill for 4-5 minutes, Alternatively, place in an oven or Air Fryer until the cheese melts and starts to turn golden brown. Serve immediately.

This recipe can prepared ahead - just cook the pasta bake in a preheated oven at 220C/200C Fan/Gas 7 for 18-20 minutes until heated through.