

Strawberry rhubarb

GALETTE WITH CREAM CHEESE CRUST

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You might think of a galette as the lazy-baker's pie, and you might not be wrong. For those of us who love the combination of buttery pastry and lightly sweetened fruit, but don't totally love the time spent rolling out a perfectly round circle of dough, that is the perfect 1/8-inch thickness; and then transferring said circle (without ripping it, mind you) to a pie plate; and then delicately and decoratively crimping its edges; and then praying that said perfectly crimped edges do not slump and collapse once baked, well, let me just say the galette is for us.

The advantages of a galette

Galettes leave lots of room for error, or, as I like to think of it, lots of room for creative license. The circle you roll out when making a galette does not need to be perfectly round, nor an even 1/8 of an inch thick. When rolling out a crust for a pie, on the other hand, it must be done evenly, as an extra thick pie bottom might bake more slowly than slightly thinner sides. Moreover, the filling in a pie can take quite a while to really set, and by the time it does so, the crust can be quite dark – maybe even too dark.

But with a galette, there is no pie plate to contain all of its magnificence: it bakes evenly due to the sheet pan it lies on. Moreover, the filling is spread in a thin layer across the dough, allowing it to set much more quickly than the traditional pie. Thus galettes are not only less finicky to assemble than pie, they are also much faster to bake.

Finally, there is no careful crimping with a galette: rustic is the name of the game here, so as you make your folds around the edge of the dough, sealing in the filling, do not worry if

one fold looks completely different than the next – that is to be expected and applauded.

This particular galette

As for this galette, well, honestly, it has a lot going for it. First, it is made with a cream cheese crust – cream cheese is substituted for some of the butter – and this means it is not only tender, but much easier to roll out than a dough made with only butter (you're welcome). Second, strawberry and rhubarb is just simply one of the best pie filling combos there is, and with a sprinkling of black pepper, for a tiny kick, and a few bits of butter for richness, this particular one, coupled with the cream cheese in the crust, truly can't be beat.

Finally, when serving this galette I am partial to scooping my ice cream directly on to the center of the galette, as in the photograph, and serving it to my guests already topped, as it were, as to me there is something super show-stop-y and fun about this presentation. But if this is not your cup of tea (and it is not my husband's, FYI) then by all means scoop individual servings onto each person's plate. It won't hold it against you.

For the crust:

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp granulated sugar
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
4 oz cream cheese, chilled, cubed
1/2 cup unsalted butter, chilled, cubed
2 tsp apple cider vinegar, chilled
1 tsp ice water

For the filling:

3/4 – 1 cup granulated sugar,
depending on the sweetness
of the berries



2 tbsp arrowroot powder, or
cornstarch
1/4 tsp salt
3-4 grinds black pepper
3 cups chopped strawberries
2 cups chopped rhubarb
2 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp strawberry jam
1-2 tablespoons softened butter

For the egg wash:

1 large egg
1/2 tsp salt

Turbinado sugar for sprinkling

What you want to do is...

For the crust, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade and process briefly to combine. Add the cream cheese and butter, and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal.

Remove the mixture from, the processor and place in a large mixing bowl. Add the vinegar and ice water and then mix with a wooden spoon. Once a bit of dough can be pinched together between two fingers and hold its shape, bring the dough together into a disk, kneading it a bit if necessary. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least one hour or up to three days.

Remove the disk from the refrigerator, place a large sheet of parchment paper on a work surface, and roll the

dough into a 12 to 14-inch circle. Lift the parchment and place it on a cookie sheet and transfer to the refrigerator while you make the filling.

To make the filling, combine the sugar, arrowroot powder and salt in a large bowl and whisk to combine. Add the fruit and then lemon juice and stir to coat.

Spread the jam over the chilled dough, leaving a 2-inch border. Place the filling in the center of the dough and spread it out over the jam. Fold up the border of the dough over the edge of the filling and crimp the dough together as you move around the galette, sealing the filling in, as you go. Place small bits of butter over the filling.

To make the egg wash, whisk together the egg and salt and brush over the edges of the dough. Sprinkle the edges with Turbinado sugar.

Freeze the galette for one hour. Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Bake the galette for 50-55 minutes until the filling bubbles in the center and the edges of the crust are nicely browned. Let rest about an hour so the filling sets up, or serve warm and a bit runny. Vanilla ice cream – atop the galette or next to it – is an awfully nice accompaniment. ●

Jessie is a baker and cookbook author; you can learn more about her through her website jessiesheehanbakes.com.