

Nothing says spring more than a bright and light lemon tart dessert



Main component of Lemon Cookie Crust Photo Susie Iventosch



INGREDIENTS

Lemon Tart on Lemon Cookie Crust

(Serves 6-8)

Crust

2 cups processed lemon cookie crumbs
3 tbsp. melted butter

Filling

6 large eggs
1/2 cup fresh squeezed lemon juice
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tbsp. salted butter
2 tsp. lemon zest
3/4 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt (be sure to use a strained yogurt, which most Greek yogurt is)

Garnishes:

1 lemon, thinly sliced
1/2 cup fresh berries (blueberries, blackberries, or raspberries)
6-8 edible flowers

DIRECTIONS

Crust

Preheat oven to 350 F. Prepare a 9.5-inch tart pan (with a removable bottom) by thoroughly coating the sides and bottom with a thin coat of butter. Be sure to get the butter into the side grooves of the pan. Sometimes it's easiest to use your fingers to do this. This will help you to remove the tart from the pan when you're ready to serve dessert. Set aside.

Process lemon cookies until fine crumbs. Pour into a mixing bowl and stir in melted butter. Mix well.

Dump this mixture into the prepared pan and pat it to evenly cover the bottom and into the sides of the pan. Bake for about 10 minutes. Remove from oven and cool completely.

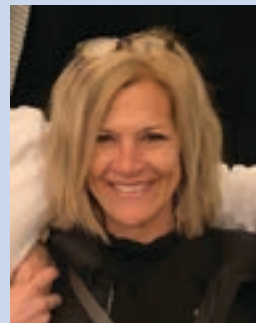
Filling (lemon curd plus yogurt)

Whisk eggs and sugar together in a saucepan or in the top of a double boiler. Add lemon juice, lemon zest and butter. Heat over medium-low heat, stirring constantly with a wire whisk, until mixture thickens so it will coat the back of a spoon. Remove from heat. Set aside until completely cool. If making ahead of time, cover the lemon curd with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to use.

Cooking the curd slowly helps to minimize lumps forming in your curd, but if you see lumps of egg in your curd, you can simply strain it through a sieve when you remove it from the heat. Push the curd through the sieve using a spoon or rubber spatula. Be sure to scrape the curd that's left on the bottom of the sieve into your bowl of strained curd. Then cool completely and cover until ready to use. The lemon zest will make it through the sieve, but the lumps will stay in the sieve.

When you are ready to make the filling, gently fold the yogurt into the chilled lemon curd. Pour into prepared crust and smooth out with an off-set spatula. Chill the tart for at least 20 minutes before garnishing.

Garnish with lemon slices, berries and flowers. Chill until ready to serve.



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By Susie Iventosch

Lemons make the perfect spring dessert, especially when you add a few colorful, fresh berries and edible flowers on top. This tart filling is made with lemon curd and nonfat plain Greek yogurt to give it a creamy and airy texture, and it's lighter in the calorie department, too. We could mix it with whipped cream, but what the heck ... it's almost bikini season! The crust is made of crushed lemon cream sandwich cookies ... think Oreo cookie crust, but lemon.

When making a tart, one of the big decisions is what kind of crust you want. You can always go with a traditional crumbly and buttery shortbread tart crust, or you can make a flourless crust with almond meal, almonds or even pecans. Or, you can use crushed lemon cookies like this recipe. I used Dare's lemon cream sandwich cookies, but if you can't find that brand, don't worry. There are

usually plenty of lemon cookie options at most grocery stores.

I like to use lemon cream sandwich cookies, because the filling helps hold the crust together, but if you have trouble finding them, just use lemon shortbread or any crispy lemon cookie you can find, or make your own. If you use cookies that don't have the cream filling in the center, you may need to use an extra bit of melted butter to make the crust stick together as you press it into the pan. Just test a little bit to see if it holds together and if not, add the extra butter a little bit at a time.

I like to use Greek yogurt for this recipe, because it has generally been strained and is thick – almost solid – which is much better for this recipe. Some yogurts are very runny, and that would make the filling too thin.

For the garnishes, just pick your favorite seasonal berries, and if you can find edible flowers, they add a nice touch.

Zheng, Acalanes head to Speech Nationals for first time



Photo Casey Scheiner

Acalanes High School freshman Andrew Zheng

By Casey Scheiner

Eighty-three years after its founding, Acalanes notched a new "first" this year, with freshman Andrew Zheng qual-

ifying to the National Speech and Debate Association's (NSDA) National Tournament in Phoenix this June, becoming the first Don to make nationals.

Zheng did not take an easy route to the nationals by any means, opting to select International Extemporaneous Speaking (IX) as his primary event.

"IX is a spontaneous event where competitors have 30 minutes to prepare a 7-minute speech on a global current events topic," Michelle Giovinazzo, a state finalist in IX from Miramonte, said. "It's not as fun as National Extemp where you get to talk about domestic topics, but it too requires quick thinking, research skills, and good delivery, making it a very challenging event."

In spite of these clear challenges raised by the impromptu nature of IX and the broad base of knowledge it demands, Zheng faced the event and all of its tribulations head on.

"I started doing speech and debate since I've always been interested in public speaking and learning more about current events," Zheng said. "That's also why I chose to do IX as my event since I thought it'd be a great opportunity to learn more about a broad variety of topics and current events around the world."

Many students interested in speech and debate can simply join their school's team and get started competing. For Zheng, the process was not so

simple.

"Acalanes didn't have a speech and debate program so I started one so that I'd be able to compete," he said. "Starting a club from scratch has been a great opportunity to learn about running an organization and building a community."

However, after months of tirelessly working to organize a high school speech program, the hard work finally paid off for Zheng, culminating at the Last Chance Qualifier, an online tournament in late April constituting a final opportunity to punch a ticket to Phoenix for the National Tournament.

"It was definitely a very different experience since it was my first time competing in an online format. For example, a lot of delays happened because of technical issues, which was predictable, but looking back it was a valuable experience," Zheng said.

In spite of any technical difficulties, he still notched a spot in the National Tournament, proving the Last Chance Qualifier a worthwhile endeavor.

Through his dedication and hard work, Zheng has won praise not only from his judges, but from his fellow speakers.

"Qualifying to nationals in a competitor's first year of extemp is a big accomplishment and Andrew should be proud,"

Giovinazzo said.

As a result of his appreciation from and bonds with other speakers, in addition to the competitive elements of the tournament, Zheng is looking forward to deepening those friendships when he travels to Phoenix this month.

"It's been great to meet competitors from other schools and it's been refreshing to find that people have very different goals and interests but are still united by a passion for public speaking. As someone who competes for a small program, the speech and debate community has been incredibly welcoming and I've made many close friends through this activity already," he said. "I think nationals is a really unique opportunity to meet people from around the country with different backgrounds and experiences and I'm really looking forward to Phoenix."

Additionally, as he heads to Phoenix for the National Tournament, Zheng appreciates the sheer remarkability of what he's done already as a freshman.

"I'm super excited for nationals! I started this year watching people at nationals as a way to learn, so I never could have imagined competing less than a year later. Knowing that I'll be competing with the best speakers out there is incredibly motivating," Zheng concluded.

'Moments in Time' opens at the Moraga Art Gallery

Submitted by George Ehrenhaft

The Moraga Art Gallery (432 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center) on Wednesday, June 7 will welcome a riveting new exhibit, "Moments in Time," featuring the work of

two popular local artists: Judy Miller, a sculptor who captures figures at particular moments in their lives, both ordinary and unique, and acrylic painter Debby Koonce, whose forte is colorful and appealing images of outdoor places both near (Mt. Diablo) and far (other lands).

Also featured is a collection of woven art by guest artist Dinah McFarlane, whose abstract wall hangings consist of materials that have been painstakingly layered, woven, dyed, twisted, looped and shaped into strikingly colorful, eye-catching assemblages. The exhibit, which also in-

cludes the work of more than 20 other artists – photographers, ceramicists, jewelry-makers, painters, woodworkers, printmakers, and more, will grace the gallery until Aug. 13.

A free reception will be held on Saturday, June 17 from 5 to 7 p.m. The public is in-

vited to view the art, chat with the artists, enjoy wine, light snacks, tasteful music and the company of fellow art lovers. The gallery, is open Wednesday to Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, visit www.moragaartgallery.com or call (925) 376-5407.