

LAVENDER, CHOCOLATE + OLIVE OIL TARTS

Many thanks to George Calombaris for the idea of chocolate and olive oil. We're all slowly coming around to the notion that extra virgin lends itself to so many things beyond pasta and tomatoes. Chocolate and olive oil is actually a brilliant combination, and prior to that, steeping the chocolate with lavender yields a subtle and fragrant effect. Piping that mousse into a sweet and crunchy pastry shell is dead simple, but also deeply satisfying.

INGREDIENTS

1 quantity of shortcrust pastry

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100ml extra virgin olive oil

150g good quality dark cooking chocolate

250g of cream with 2 tablespoons
of sugar, whipped to firm peaks

5 stalks of lavender, well washed,
and wrapped in muslin cloth

Roll out the shortcrust pastry until its roughly 3 - 4mm thick.

Spray some small pastry molds with non stick spray and line them with the shortcrust pastry. Blind bake them at 160C until they're dark and golden.

For the mousse, put the lavender and chocolate in a metal bowl and slowly melt over barely boiling water in a saucepan.

Let the lavender steep in the chocolate for 10 minutes or so. Remove the lavender and scrape off as much chocolate as possible from the muslin cloth.

Incorporate the olive oil slowly into the chocolate. Stir in one third of the whipped cream well, then fold in carefully the remaining two thirds. Using a piping bag, pipe the mousse into the cooled pastry shells.