

The Ultimate Homemade Milk Tart: A Creamy, Classic Comfort Dessert

As a professional food writer for



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INGREDIENTS

For the Pastry:

125g Butter: Softened to room temperature.

2 tablespoons Sugar: Just enough to sweeten the crust.

1 tablespoon Oil: This helps with the crispness and pliability of the dough.

1 Egg: To bind the pastry together.

2 cups Flour: All-purpose flour works best here.

1 teaspoon Baking Powder: Gives the crust a slight lift.

Pinch of Salt: To balance the flavors.

For the Filling:

4 cups Milk: Full-fat milk is highly recommended for the creamiest result.

125g Butter: Adds richness to the custard.

2 Eggs: For structure and color.

1/2 cup Sugar: Adjusted to be perfectly sweet but not cloying.

1/2 cup Corn Flour (Cornstarch): The essential thickening agent.

1 teaspoon Vanilla Essence: For that classic aromatic finish.

Ground Cinnamon: For dusting over the top.

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare the Pastry: Start by creaming together your 125g of butter and 2 tablespoons of sugar until the mixture is light and fluffy. Stir in the tablespoon of oil and mix well. Add the egg and beat until fully incorporated.
2. Sift in your dry ingredients: the 2 cups of flour, baking powder, and salt. Mix until a soft dough forms. Don't overwork it-you want to keep that pastry tender!
3. Form and Bake the Base: Preheat your oven to 180°C. Take your pie dish (a standard 9 or 10-inch dish works well) and spread the pastry dough into it. Pro Tip: The pastry must be spread very thin to ensure it bakes through and stays crisp.
4. Use a fork to poke several holes across the bottom of the pastry (this prevents it from puffing up). Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the edges are a beautiful golden brown. Set aside to cool.
5. Start the Custard Filling: In a large saucepan, combine the 4 cups of milk and 125g of butter. Bring this to a gentle boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally to ensure the butter is completely melted and the milk doesn't scorch.
6. Temper the Eggs: While the milk is heating, whisk the 2 eggs in a separate bowl. Add the 1/2 cup of sugar and mix well, then whisk in the 1/2 cup of cornflour. Ensure there are no lumps in this mixture.
7. Thicken and Finish: Once the milk and butter have reached a boil, slowly pour the egg mixture into the saucepan. You must stir continuously during this step to prevent the eggs from scrambling. Keep stirring as the mixture thickens into a heavy, smooth custard. Once thickened, remove from heat and stir in the

vanilla essence.

8. **Set the Tart:** Pour the warm custard into your pre-baked pastry shell. Smooth the top with a spatula and immediately dust generously with ground cinnamon. Allow the tart to cool at room temperature before transferring it to the fridge to set completely.

SWAPS & NOTES

The Flour: If you are looking for a gluten-free option, a 1-to-1 gluten-free baking flour can be used for the crust, though the texture may be slightly more crumbly.

The Sugar: You can use caster sugar for a finer texture in the custard, though regular granulated sugar works perfectly fine.

The Fat: Do not swap the butter for margarine if you can help it.
The butter provides the essential "melt-in-your-mouth" quality for the crust.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

No Lumps Allowed: If you find your custard is getting lumpy, use a whisk instead of a spoon and beat it vigorously.

Thin is In: When pressing the dough into the pan, use the back of a spoon or your fingers to get it as thin as possible.

A thick crust can become "doughy" once the custard is added.

If you cut it while it's still warm, the custard might run.

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