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SP.287 / 5.S15 / ESG.SP287 Kitchen Chemistry
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Mile-High Lemon Meringue Tarts

From Women's Day, February 1, 2001, page 124

Ingredients:

Lemon filling

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup white sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup water
- Yolks from 2 large eggs (reserve whites for meringue)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup fresh lemon juice (from 1 – 2 lemons)
- 1 tbsp. freshly graded lemon peel (from 1 lemon)
- 1 tbsp. stick butter
- 1 package (4 oz) ready-to-fill single-serve graham cracker crusts (6 per package)

Meringue

- Whites from 4 large eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

Method:

Lemon filling

1. Whisk sugar and cornstarch in the top bowl of a double boiler to mix.
2. Whisk in water, egg yolks and lemon juice until smooth.
3. Place bowl over double boiler, stirring often with the whisk.
4. Boil, stirring constantly, 1 minute or until filling is translucent and thick.
5. Remove from heat. Add lemon peel and butter; stir until butter melts.
6. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup into each cracker crust and place on a rimmed baking sheet

Meringue:

1. Heat oven to 350 °F.
2. Beat egg whites, vinegar and vanilla in a medium metal or copper bowl with a whisk until soft peaks form when whisk is lifted.
3. Gradually beat in sugar, 1 tbsp. at a time, increasing whisking speed and beating well after each addition until sugar dissolves.
4. Beat 2 minutes longer or until stiff peaks form when beaters are lifted
5. Mound Meringue high on each tart, spread to edge of crust , then swirl with back of a teaspoon
6. Bake 20 minutes or until meringue is browned an instant-read thermometer inserted in center of meringue registers 160 °F.
7. Cool completely on a wire rack, then refrigerate at least 2 hours or up to 8.
8. If you wish to share one, use a small sharp knife dipped in cold water to cut through the meringue smoothly.