

# Aunt Kitty's Fruit Tarts

**ANNE PAUTLER, UCLA Strategic Communications, 2018**

In January 1957 my great-aunt Kitty Ebeling's fruit tart recipe was featured in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch (below). Memorably, the photos were in full color: the Sunday "rotogravure" section. One of my cousins still has the framed newspaper page. These tarts require quite a bit of work. As children, we pitched in by crimping the edges with a fork and sprinkling cinnamon-sugar on the pastry. The very smell of the tarts baking takes me back to childhood. Over the years, my cousins and I have made small changes: butter instead of margarine, for instance, preserves rather than canned fruit, cookie cutters rather than freeform.

The recipe makes at least 4 dozen tarts: perfect for a recipe exchange, party or gift-giving, but way too many for the typical household. So plan to share!

## Pastry Ingredients

4 cups all-purpose flour  
1 lb butter  
3 egg yolks  
8 oz sour cream  
1 cake fresh active yeast  
1 pinch salt



## Filling and Other Ingredients

Fruit filling--thick preserves are best, jam is too thin and tends to leak out. I like to do one jar each of light-colored and dark-colored preserves, for instance:

Apricot and blueberry, or peach and boysenberry, or sugar and cinnamon mixture.

## Directions

### Step One: Making the pastry dough

Be sure the butter is chilled—you can't work properly with soft butter. In a large bowl, cut the butter into the flour as for piecrust. Use your fingertips or a pastry blender just until most of mixture resembles coarse meal with some roughly pea-size butter lumps.

In a small bowl lightly beat the egg yolks with a fork. Then combine the sour cream, crumbled cake yeast and a pinch of salt.

Make a well in the center of the flour-butter mixture. Add the wet ingredients and mix from the outside in. Mix thoroughly, but don't overwork the dough. In the end you should have a large ball of pale yellow dough. Wrap in a damp towel and refrigerate for several hours; the dough is much easier to work with when it's thoroughly chilled.

### Step Two: Rolling out the dough

As with any pastry, you want to avoid too much handling of the dough and too much extra flour. A marble surface seems to work best. Use a small amount of flour if the dough sticks to the rolling pin.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Pinch off a portion of dough and roll flat — a little thinner than a pie shell. Cut out 3-inch circles. I use a cookie cutter or cut around the rim of a glass.

### Step Three: Assembling and baking the tarts

On a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper, position the circles of dough. Put a spoonful of filling in the center of each circle. Fold the circle over and crimp the edges with a fork. Sprinkle lightly with the sugar and cinnamon mixture.

Bake at 375 degrees until golden brown. (I start checking at 8 minutes—my oven is not the most reliable, so the first batch may take 11 minutes while later batches take a little over 8.) Makes about 4 dozen tarts.