

GALETTE de ROIS

(King cake)

This is not your New Orleans, Mardi Gras, colored frosting, doughy king cake, but is a real French version, commonly served throughout France at this time of the year. En garde (as they say in France) for the "feve" inside.

Ingredients:

Instead of making our own pastry for this, we'll use commercial frozen puff pastry. When working with this product, it is important to keep it well-chilled and to work quickly when rolling it, as it tends to get stubborn as it warms up. Keep the second piece in the refrigerator until after you have rolled out the first.

For the almond filling

1 cup almond Flour
½ cup Sugar
Pinch Salt
Zest of ½ Orange, washed
3 ½ oz unsalted Butter, cubed, at room temperature
2 large Eggs at room temperature
2 tsp Rum
¼ tsp Almond Extract
1 lb Puff Pastry, divided in two pieces, chilled

For the glaze

1 Egg yolk
1 tsp Milk

Method:

To make the almond filling: in a medium bowl, or in the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the almond flour, sugar, salt and orange zest.

Mash in the butter until it's completely incorporated.

Stir in the eggs one at a time, along with the rum and almond extract, (the mixture may not look completely smooth, which is normal.) Cover and chill.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

On a lightly floured surface, roll one piece of puff pastry into a circle about 9 ½" in diameter.

Using a pot lid, plate, or the bottom of a springform pan, as a template, trim the dough into a neat circle.

Place the dough on the baking sheet.

Cover it with a sheet of parchment paper or plastic film, then roll the other piece of dough into a circle, trim it, and lay it on top. Chill the dough for 30 minutes.

Remove the dough and the almond filling from the refrigerator.

Slide the second circle of dough and parchment or plastic from the pan, so that there is only once circle of dough on the parchment-lined baking sheet.

Spread the almond filling over the center of the dough, leaving a 1-inch exposed border.

Place an almond to act as the *feve* (prize) somewhere in the filling.

Brush water generously around the exposed perimeter of the dough.

Then place the other circle of dough on top of the galette and press down to seal the edges very well. (At this point, you may wish to chill the galette since it will be easier to finish and decorate – although it's not necessary. (If making ahead, it can be refrigerated overnight at this point.)

To bake the galette: preheat the oven to 375° F.

Flute the sides of the dough by making ridges all around the edge – like a bottle cap.

Use a paring knife to create a design on top.

Stir together the egg yolk with the milk and brush it evenly over the top – avoid getting the glaze on the sides, which will inhibit the pastry from rising at the edges.

Use a paring knife to poke five holes in the top, to allow steam to escape while baking.

Bake for 30 minutes, or until the galette is browned on top and up the sides. (During baking, if the galette puffs up too dramatically in the oven, you may want to poke it once or twice again with a paring knife to release more steam.)

Remove from the oven and slide the galette off the baking sheet and onto a cooling rack.

The galette will deflate as it cools, which is normal.

Let it cool a bit and serve warm (or at room temperature).