

Blueberry Lavender Pavlova Tart



Ingredients

Meringue

- 4 egg whites, at room temperature
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 2 teaspoons cornflour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste

Lavender Whipped Cream

- 2 cups thickened cream
- 2 level teaspoons Bridestowe Culinary Lavender
- 3 tablespoons icing sugar mixture, sifted

Blueberry Sauce

- 2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1/3 cup liqueur muscat (or tawny port)
- 1/3 cup caster sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 star anise

Handful fresh blueberries, to serve

Baby mint leaves, to serve

Method

1. To make the meringue, outline a 33x11cm rectangle on a piece of baking paper and then turn the paper upside down on a baking tray and set aside. Double check your stand mixer bowl and whisk attachment are absolutely clean, dry and free from any traces of grease in order for the meringue to get the maximum volume.
2. Set the oven rack in the middle and preheat the oven to 120C for a fan forced oven.
3. To make the meringue, place the egg whites in the mixer bowl and whisk until firm peaks have just formed. Add the cup of caster sugar, one teaspoon at a time, whisking well between each addition until the mixture is thick and glossy.
4. Add the cornflour, vinegar and vanilla and whisk until it has just combined. Place all of the mixture in a large piping bag fitted with a large star tip. Using a slight up and down motion, pipe the four sides of the pavlova tart over the outlined rectangular shape to achieve the tart shape. Fill in the middle of the rectangle making sure there aren't any gaps in the bottom. You should now have a case that resembles a rectangular tart tin.
5. Place the meringue in the oven to bake for at least 1 ½ - 2 hours or until it is lovely and dry and you are able to easily lift it off the paper without it sticking. Turn off the oven and leave the oven door ajar (I like to place a wooden spoon in the door to make sure it doesn't open too much) for at least 3 hours or until the meringue is completely cold.
6. While waiting for the pavlova to bake and cool, make the lavender cream by placing the thickened cream in a small saucepan and adding the culinary lavender. Bring to a simmer over a medium heat and then turn the heat off. Leave the mixture in the saucepan for 10 minutes to allow the lavender to work its magic, then strain the cream into a bowl and discard the lavender leaves. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on top of the cream to avoid a skin forming and pop the bowl into the fridge to cool for at least a couple of hours or until the pavlova is ready to assemble.
7. To make the blueberry sauce, place all the ingredients in a medium saucepan and, stirring, bring to a boil over a medium heat. Lower the heat slightly and allow the mixture to simmer for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the syrup has slightly thickened. Place in a heatproof container and allow to completely cool.
8. When it is time to serve the pavlova, complete the lavender cream. Combine the chilled cream and the icing sugar in the bowl of your stand mixer and beat on a medium-high speed until soft peaks form and it holds its shape. Be careful at this stage as the cream goes from ready to overbeaten in seconds.
9. To assemble the cake, place the pavlova tart case on a serving platter. Place the lavender cream in the cavity, making waves in the cream with the back of the spoon to provide the sauce with grooves to fill. Gently spoon half the blueberry mixture over the cream, reserving the other half of the mixture in a small container (to enjoy over ice cream, yoghurt or mascapone). Make sure you dribble some of that gorgeous syrup over the pavlova case as the contrasting colours are simply beautiful. Scatter the fresh blueberries and mint leaves over the tart and serve immediately.