

Dinner with Margie | Ottolenghi's 'Very Full Tart' from Plenty

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Recipe from *Plenty: A Cookbook* by Ottolenghi and Tamimi



As we mentioned earlier this week, when we were planning a menu with our contest winner Margie, we knew that one of the guests was vegetarian. Rather than consign her to having just a salad and some side dishes, we decided to do a fully veggies-only meal.

We love vegetables, but we always fret a little about a vegetarian dinner. How do you keep it from just being a progression of side dishes? Will it be filling enough? *What's the main course??*

This so-called "Very Full Tart," from Yotam Ottolenghi's *Plenty* was our savior.

There's a fair amount of chopping and active oven time here, roasting vegetables in a sequence according to how long they need to cook. But this recipe is still very straightforward and pretty simple (especially if you use store-bought pie crust, as we did).

It's especially good for a dinner party like the one we were having: We baked this ahead of time, for about half an hour (slightly less than the 35-45 minutes of bake time in the final step of the recipe). Then we finished it off for another 15 minutes or so once our guests arrived. It sat on the counter while we ate our fattoush, and it was perfectly ready in time for the main course.

This tart is seriously delicious. It's fully of great summer veggies, and the thyme adds a nice fresh note.

The best part about this recipe, though, is its adaptability. You could swap in just about any vegetable here. Don't have zucchini? Use a yellow squash. Want to add corn? Do it! Don't like sweet potato? Use a regular potato instead, or a couple carrots, or a rutabaga, or a parsnip, or a turnip. Or leave it out altogether.

It's endlessly variable. Just be aware of how long each vegetable needs to roast (carrots or parsnips or turnips, like sweet potatoes, need longer roasting than zucchini or summer squash would).

The next time you're looking for a great vegetarian main dish -- or a delicious meal, period -- consider this tart. Follow the recipe faithfully or use it as a basic blueprint for building your own very full tart.

Ottolenghi's 'Very Full Tart'

From *Plenty* by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Timimi

Buy *Plenty*

Serves 4-6

1 red bell pepper
1 yellow bell pepper
about 6 Tablespoons olive oil
1 medium eggplant, cut into 2-inch dice
salt and black pepper
1 small sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1-inch dice
1 small zucchini, cut into 1-inch dice
2 medium onions, thinly sliced
2 bay leaves
11 oz pie crust dough
8 thyme sprigs, leaves picked
1/3 cup ricotta
4 1/4 oz feta
7 cherry tomatoes, halved
2 medium eggs
1 cup heavy cream

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Use a small serrated knife to cut around the stem of the peppers and lift it out along with the seeds. Shake the peppers to remove all the remaining seeds; discard the stems and seeds. Place the two peppers in a small ovenproof dish, drizzle with a little oil and put on the top shelf in the oven.

Mix the eggplant in a bowl with 4 tablespoons of olive oil and some salt and pepper. Spread in a large baking pan and place in the oven on the shelf beneath the peppers.

After 12 minutes add the sweet potato dice to the eggplant pan and stir gently. Return to the oven to roast for another 12 minutes. Then add the zucchini to the pan, stir and roast for a further 10 to 12 minutes. At this point the peppers should be brown and the rest of the vegetables cooked. Remove all from the oven and reduce the temperature to 325 degrees. Cover the peppers with foil and cool, then peel and tear roughly into strips.

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a frying pan on medium heat. Saute the onions with the bay leaves and some salt for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until they turn brown, soft and sweet. Remove from the heat, discard the bay leaves and set aside.

Lightly grease a 9-inch loose-bottomed tart pan. Roll out the pie crust dough to a circle roughly 1/8 inch thick and large enough to line the pan, plus extra to hang over the rim. Carefully line the pan with the dough, pressing it into the corners and leaving the excess hanging over the top edge. Line the dough with a large sheet of parchment paper and fill it with pie weights or dried beans. Bake the crust for 30 minutes. Carefully remove the paper with the weights, then bake for 10 to 15 minutes more, or until it turns golden brown. Remove and allow to cool a little.

Scatter the cooked onion over the bottom of the crust and top with the roasted vegetables, arranging them evenly. Scatter half the thyme leaves over. Next, dot the veg with small chunks of both cheeses and then with the tomato halves, cut-side up.

Whisk the eggs and cream in a small bowl with some salt and pepper. Carefully pour this mix into the tart; the top layer of tomatoes and cheese should remain exposed. Scatter the remaining thyme over the top. Place in the oven and bake for 35 to 45 minutes, or until the filling sets and turns golden. Remove and allow to rest for at least 10 minutes before releasing the tart from the pan and serving.