



## Luscious Lemon Tart Cups

By Erin Fletter

**Prep Time** 40 / **Cook Time** 12 / **Serves** 4 - 6

### Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**juice:** to extract or squeeze out the juice of a fruit or vegetable, like a lemon, orange, or carrot, often cutting open or peeling the fruit or veggie first to access its flesh.

**zest:** to scrape off the outer colored part of a citrus fruit's rind (skin or peel) using a metal tool with small sharp blades, such as a zester, microplane, or the small holes of a grater (avoid the "pith," the white, spongy lining of the rind that can be bitter).

**shape:** to form food into a specific shape by hand or with a cutting tool—examples are cutting cookie dough into shapes with cookie cutters, forming bread dough into a roll or crescent shape, and rolling ground meat into a meatball.

**whisk:** to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

### Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan or mini-muffin pan
- Small saucepan
- Zester (or grater with small zesting plate/side)
- Citrus juicer (optional)
- Dry measuring cups
- Liquid measuring cup
- Whisk
- Measuring spoons
- Fork for mixing the dough

- Pastry brush (optional)

## Ingredients

### Luscious Lemon Tart Cups

- Lemon Quick Curd:
- 1 large lemon, washed
- 1/4 C cornstarch (or arrowroot powder)
- 1/4 C sugar/honey/agave nectar (or 1 to 2 stevia packets)
- 1 C milk **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free milk)\*\***
- 1 pinch ground turmeric, optional for color
- Easy-Peasy Pastry Crust:
- 1 1/2 C all-purpose flour **\*\* (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free flour)\*\***
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp sugar (or 1/2 stevia packet)
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 C (or 8 T) softened butter **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free butter, like Earth Balance, or vegetable shortening)\*\***
- 1/4 C milk **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free milk)\*\***
- vegetable oil for greasing pan

## Food Allergen Substitutions

### Luscious Lemon Tart Cups

**Dairy:** Substitute dairy-free/nut-free milk in lemon curd and crust. Substitute dairy-free/nut-free butter or vegetable shortening for butter in crust.

**Gluten/Wheat:** Substitute gluten-free flour in crust.

## Instructions

### Luscious Lemon Tart Cups

zest + juice

Have kids zest the outside of **1 lemon** carefully with a grater or zester—the yellow part only, as the white pith is bitter. Set the zest to the side and then have kids juice the lemon and set the juice to the side.

### combine + whisk

Combine the lemon zest, the lemon juice, **1/4 cup cornstarch**, **1/4 cup sugar**, and **1 cup milk** into a small saucepan on your stovetop. Add **1 pinch of turmeric** for color, if you like. Whisk everything together and then turn the heat on to medium.

### boil + cool

Bring the lemon curd to a boil, continuing to stir with a whisk. Once boiling, turn off the heat and whisk carefully until thick and smooth, with no lumps! Let the lemon curd cool in your saucepan or transfer to a bowl.

### preheat + measure + mix

Time to make the tart crust! Preheat your oven to 450 F. Then, have kids measure and mix the following dry ingredients in a bowl: **1 1/2 cups flour**, **1/4 teaspoon salt**, **1 teaspoon sugar**, and **1/2 teaspoon baking powder**. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and add **1/2 cup butter** and **1/4 cup milk**. Mix the dough with a fork until it makes a ball, then separate it into small balls.

### flatten + press

Have kids flatten and press each dough ball into a circular flat shape with their clean hands, making tart crusts that will fit in the wells of a regular or mini-muffin pan—your choice!

### brush + bake

Brush the muffin pan wells with a bit of oil, and then carefully place the flattened dough into the middle of each well and up the sides. Bake in your preheated oven for 5 to 7 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from the oven, cool for 5 minutes in the pan, and then remove tart shells onto a cooling rack or plate.

### fill + top

Once cool, fill each tart shell with the cooled lemon curd. Then top with Softly Shaken Cream and No-Cook Raspberry Drizzle (see recipes).

## Featured Ingredient: Lemon!

Hi! I'm Lemon!

“I just love the sun, don't you? That's because I'm a lemon, and we grow so much better in sun and warmth. My skin is a lovely, sunny yellow color. I'm a citrus fruit, but I'm not sweet like an orange. So if you bite into me, your mouth might pucker! But if you squeeze out my juice, then add water and sugar to it, you'll enjoy the sweet and sour taste of lemonade! My zest and juice can bring a wonderful brightness to

many dishes."

## History

Lemon trees are small evergreen trees thought to be native to Asia. Sometime in the first century, they came to Italy and the Mediterranean region. Although the trees were widely distributed throughout the Middle East and Mediterranean countries between the 8th and 11th centuries, they weren't cultivated to a great extent until the middle of the 1400s in Italy. Spanish explorers brought lemon seeds with them to the Americas later in the 15th century. By the 19th century, you could find lemon trees in Florida and California.

Today, California and Arizona produce 95 percent of the entire lemon crop in the United States.

During the European Renaissance, fashionable ladies used lemon juice as a way to redden their lips! Today you might find people with naturally blond or light brown hair using lemon juice, diluted with water, to lighten their hair. This method is subtle and requires exposure to sunlight to see results, so be sure to put sunscreen on your skin!

Lemons were once so rare that kings would give them away as gifts.

## Anatomy & Etymology

There are two different types of lemons—acidic and sweet. The most common acidic varieties include Eureka and Lisbon. The acidic types are grown commercially, and the sweet types are grown mainly by home gardeners. Lemon trees bloom and produce fruit year-round. Each tree can produce up to 500 to 600 lemons annually.

Lemons are hybrids of bitter or sour oranges and citrons, another type of citrus fruit.

Lemons are technically berries. All citrus fruits are berries!

Lemons are protected by a rind or peel and a lining of spongy, white tissue called the "pith." When zesting lemon peel for a recipe, you want to avoid including the pith, which is bitter. Lemon flesh is plump, full of juice, and studded with seeds.

Common types of lemons include Eureka, Lisbon, and Meyer. Meyer lemons have a sweeter, more floral taste and aroma. They are a combination of a lemon and a sweet orange. Eureka lemons are the most prolifically grown lemon in the world. They have pointed, tapered ends.

The word "lemon" is from the Middle English "lymon," from the Old French "limon," which is from the Arabic "līmūn," a collective term for citrus fruits.

## How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

To choose lemons with the most juice, look for those with thin peels and are heavy for their size. There are about three tablespoons of lemon juice in one lemon and about eight seeds.

Lemon juice is sour by itself, but you can add lemon juice and zest from the rind to bring an acidic balance to a sweeter recipe, like cakes, cookies, and curds. It also brightens up vinaigrettes, marinades, and risottos. Lemons can be squeezed over grilled, fried, or roasted chicken, fish, or vegetables. You can make lemonade with the juice and tea from the lemon leaves.

Lemon juice keeps cut pears, apples, bananas, and avocados from turning brown because the acid helps keep the fruit from oxidizing.

## Nutrition

Vitamin C! The rind of the lemon has the most vitamin C. Since lemons are high in vitamin C, they have been used throughout history to prevent scurvy—a disease that causes bleeding gums, loose teeth, and aching joints. To this day, the British Navy requires ships to carry enough lemons so that every sailor can have one ounce of lemon juice a day. The demand for lemons and their scurvy-preventing properties hit a peak during the California Gold Rush of 1849. Miners were willing to pay large sums for a single lemon. As a result, lemon trees were planted in abundance throughout California.

Lemon oil, extracted from lemon peel, cannot be ingested. However, when diluted and applied to a person's skin, there is evidence that it acts as an antibacterial and antifungal. Diffused in the air or added to bath water as aromatherapy, it can ease anxiety and stress, lift mood, and sharpen brain function.

Citrus fruits, like lemons and limes, have citric acid, which can help prevent kidney stones from forming.