

VALENTINE'S MINI-HEARTS MOUSSE CAKES

(inspired from many sources)

for the sable base:

120 g cold butter, cut in pieces

65 g powdered sugar

260 g all-purpose flour

30 g almond flour

pinch of salt

1 egg

Heat oven to 375 F.

Add the sugar, flour, almond flour and salt to the bowl of a KitchenAid type mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix at low speed for about 30 seconds just to incorporate the ingredients together. Add the cold butter and process until the butter gets in small pieces, a bit smaller than pea-size. Add the egg and mix just until it starts to glue together as a dough, but stop before it all gets into a single mass to avoid gluten formation. Gather the dough on a piece of plastic wrap and gently form it as a disk with your hand.

Roll the pastry between plastic or parchment paper to a 3mm thickness. Cut heart or round shapes. Place over parchment paper on a baking sheet and freeze for 10 minutes. Bake for about 10 minutes until it starts to get golden around the edges. Reserve.

for the quinoa-crisp:

115 g white chocolate

20 g pistachio paste (or almond butter)

20 g puffed quinoa (or rice Krispies)

Bake the puffed quinoa in a 325 F oven for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, melt the white chocolate in a microwave very gently. Mix the melted chocolate with the pistachio paste. Add the quinoa and spread in a 4 mm (1/8 inch) thickness in between two sheets of parchment paper. It will be a little sticky, try to level it as best as you can. When it is cooled down a bit, cut the exact dimension of the bigger mold you will use for the dessert. Reserve in freezer until needed.

For the Raspberry Mousse insert:

2 g of Platinum gelatin (1 sheet)

100 g mashed raspberries (fresh or frozen), seeds sieved out

20 g granulated sugar

100 g whipping cream, cold

First, put the gelatin leaves, in a bowl with very cold water to bloom for 10 minutes. In a small saucepan, heat the raspberry puree until it boils. Remove from heat, wait 5 minutes, drain the gelatin and add to the mixture. Mix until completely dissolved. Let cool to about 95 F.

Meanwhile, whip the cream to soft peaks. Gradually incorporate the cream into the raspberry mixture. Place the mousse in the semi-spheres and freeze overnight.

For the mascarpone mousse:

6 g Platinum gelatin (3 sheets)

80 ml whipping cream

55 g egg yolks

80 g granulated sugar

160 g mascarpone cheese

1/4 tsp vanilla paste

320 g heavy cream

Bloom the gelatin in cold water for 10 minutes. Combine egg yolks with sugar, whisking well and set aside. In a saucepan, heat 80 ml of cream until it boils. Remove from heat, and slowly pour a bit of the hot liquid into the egg yolk mixture, to temper it gently. Add the rest of the cream and transfer all the mixture to a saucepan.

Over low heat, cook until 180 F stirring constantly. Remove from heat, drain the gelatin, and add to the mixture, stirring until completely dissolved. Let the mixture cool down to around 140 F. Add the mascarpone cheese, mix until the cheese is incorporated. Process with a hand mixer, to emulsify. Add the vanilla paste, and let it cool to around 95 F.

Meanwhile, whip the 320 ml of cream to soft peaks. Incorporate the cream gradually to the mascarpone mixture. Place in the mini-hearts mold, 1/2 to the volume, spread gently with a spoon around the sides to avoid air bubble. Drop the frozen raspberry inserts, cover with mousse almost to the top, place the crunchy quinoa layer on top, press gently and freeze overnight.

For the mirror glaze:

3 sheets Platinum grade sheet gelatin

120ml water

150 g liquid glucose

150 g granulated or caster sugar

1 tsp agar-agar

100 g condensed milk

150 g white chocolate, chopped fairly small

½ tsp titanium oxide (optional, but advisable)

red gel food coloring

Put the water, sugar, liquid glucose and agar-agar in a small pan and bring to simmering point, stirring occasionally to dissolve the sugar. Remove from the heat and let it stand for about 5 minutes. This is the base syrup for the glaze. Meanwhile, soak the gelatin in some cold water for about 5 minutes. Squeeze out the excess water and stir into the hot water, sugar and liquid glucose mixture to dissolve. Stir in the condensed milk and the titanium oxide.

Put the chocolate in a medium bowl and pour this hot mixture slowly over the chocolate, stirring gently to melt it, avoid making bubbles. Add the red gel food dye. A stick immersion blender works great, but you must keep the blades fully submerged at all times. If bubbles are present, pass the mixture through a fine sieve.

The ideal temperature to glaze is 92 to 94 F. Glaze the frozen mousse cakes, decorate with sprinkles if desired.

Defrost 2 hours in fridge before serving.