

Fénétra Cake (Traditional Toulouse Recipe)

Origin:

Fénétra dates back to Roman times and was traditionally baked during spring festivals honoring the dead (*fenestria* in Latin, meaning “window to the spirits”). Today, it’s Toulouse’s signature pastry — light, nutty, and citrusy, often enjoyed with a cup of coffee or a glass of sweet wine.

Ingredients (*for one 9-inch cake*)

For the pastry base:

- 200 g (1 ½ cups) all-purpose flour
- 100 g (7 tbsp) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 50 g (¼ cup) sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- 2–3 tbsp cold water
- Pinch of salt

For the almond topping:

- 3 eggs, separated
- 120 g (1 cup) ground almonds
- 100 g (½ cup) sugar
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp flour

Filling:

- 4–5 tbsp apricot jam (preferably tart, not too sweet)
 - 2–3 tbsp candied lemon peel, finely chopped
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Instructions

1. Make the pastry:

In a bowl, combine flour, sugar, and salt. Add butter and rub with your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add the egg yolk and water, just enough to bring the dough together. Wrap and chill for 30 minutes.

2. Prepare the filling:

Mix apricot jam with chopped candied lemon peel. Set aside.

3. Make the almond mixture:

In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks with sugar until pale and creamy. Add ground almonds, lemon zest, and flour.

In a separate bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form, then gently fold them into the almond mixture.

4. Assemble:

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F).

Roll out the pastry and line a buttered tart pan. Spread the apricot-lemon filling evenly, then pour the almond mixture over the top and smooth the surface.

5. **Bake:**

Bake for about 30–35 minutes, until the top is golden and just firm to the touch.

6. **Serve:**

Let cool completely before slicing. Dust with powdered sugar if desired.

Tasting Notes:

Fénétra is beautifully balanced — the **almonds bring a nutty sweetness**, the **lemon adds brightness**, and the **apricot jam gives it a sunny, southern tang**. It's a cake that tastes like Toulouse itself: generous, warm, and just a little unexpected.