



# Elderflower Cheesecake



Serves 6

## Ingredients

- 500g sweet shortcrust pastry
- 250g ricotta cheese
- 2 medium eggs, separated
- 100g caster sugar
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 2 tbsp double cream
- grated zest 1 lemon
- 3-4 large elderflower heads

**Tip:** *Don't wash the elderflowers, as it removes all the pollen which is essential in giving the wonderful taste. Just shake the flower heads to remove any bugs and inspect them carefully. It pays not to be too squeamish, with some insects being so tiny, it is inevitable that you'll end up eating some of them!*

## Method

Preheat the oven to 190C / 375F / Gas 5.

Roll out the pastry to about 4mm thick and line a 20cm round non-stick springform tin. Work the pastry in so that it fits nicely. Don't worry if there are a few folds, just make sure to avoid any holes – these can be patched up with spare pastry. Leave the pastry roughly hanging over the edges at the top – no need to trim as this will crumble away later for a rustic look. Put into the oven and bake blind for about 10 minutes.

Now for the fiddly bit. Pick all the tiny flowers off the stems, discarding the thick green parts. You'll now have a nice pile of free-flowing flowers. Set to one side.

In a large bowl, beat together the ricotta cheese, egg yolks, caster sugar, plain flour, double cream and lemon zest. When it is smooth and glossy, stir in the elderflowers and mix well. Set aside.

In another bowl beat the egg whites until they are stiff.

Take a small amount of egg white and stir well into the elderflower mixture. Fold in the remaining egg white, a little at a time, taking care not to knock out the air. When it is all well incorporated, pour into the pastry case and bake in the centre of the oven for about 1 hour.

The cake is ready when it is risen with a golden top. The filling should still wobble slightly.

Switch off the oven, but leave the cheesecake in with the door open to cool. The cake will sink a little with some cracking, but this is normal.

When completely cool, remove from the tin and transfer to a serving plate.

Keep refrigerated.