

TO VEGETABLES
with love

Yuzu-miso glazed asparagus tart

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Yuzu is a citrus fruit that has been popularized in Japanese cooking. It's tart but also has vibrant floral and fruity tones. If a comparison needed to be drawn, I would say tart like grapefruit but sweeter like a mandarin. I usually buy it from Japanese grocery stores; of course, you can substitute with lemon, but add the zest too to give it a fresh citrus punch.

The miso glazed asparagus could easily be enjoyed without the puff pastry, simply as a side dish.

For those in the southern hemisphere where asparagus is not in season, try thinly sliced brussels sprouts.

To veganize this, either use a vegan cream - either homemade cashew cream or store-bought vegan sour cream - or non-dairy feta. For the egg wash, just brush the pastry with non-dairy milk.

Serves 4

1 sheet puff pastry (about 250g)
113g (4 ounces) goats cheese (or other soft creamy cheese such as xxx)
300g (1 bunch) asparagus, woody stems removed
salt and black pepper
4-5 teaspoons sesame seeds
1 egg, beaten with 2 teaspoons of milk
Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Yuzu-Miso glaze

2 tablespoon white (shiro) miso paste
2 tablespoons yuzu juice (or lemon)
1 tablespoon sesame oil
2 teaspoons white sugar

Preheat oven to 220°C / 425°F.

To make the glaze, place the miso, yuzu, sesame oil and sugar in a bowl and whisk to combine.

Place the puff pastry on top of a sheet of baking paper, and roll it out so it is wide enough to accommodate the full length of the asparagus spears and long enough to fit all of them.

Using a small knife, lightly score a 2cm / 3/4-inch border around the edge of the puff pastry. Break up half of the goats cheese and scatter it inside the scored border. Line up the asparagus on top of the goats cheese, pressing it down so they sit flat. Brush the yuzu-miso glaze all over the asparagus, covering it well. Season with salt and black pepper.

Brush the border of the pastry with the egg wash. Scatter sesame seeds along the egg washed edge. Carefully transfer the tart onto a baking sheet.

Drizzle a bit of olive oil over everything - the asparagus and the border - and place in the middle rack in the oven. Bake until the pastry is puffed and the border is golden. Remove from the oven and allow to sit for 1-2 minutes, and then brush the asparagus with the remaining glaze (I use it all but that is up to you). Dot the remaining goats cheese on top and allow to cool for 5 minutes (this allows the pastry to settle and makes it easier to cut).

Cut into squares and serve with a side salad or as part of a larger spread.