LEMONS SQUARED

A Delicate lemon shortbread crust with a refreshing creamy lemon curd.
(For perfect results, be sure to have everything in place and ready to go in this two-step process , curd is a time and temperature sensitive process.)

Step 1.
The Crust

2 cups of flour 300 grams (gluten free option: Almond , coconut or hazelnut flour)
2 sticks of unsalted butter 230 grams cubed (1 ½ sticks if using nut flour)
¾ cup granulated sugar 160 grams.
1 teaspoon kosher salt 5 grams
1 tablespoon lemon zest (zest of 2 large lemons
1 teaspoon vanilla. 5 ml.
Additions to flavor profile: Consider adding A tablespoon of any of the following to compliment the lemon. Fresh lavender, lemon verbena, basil, lemon thyme, ground pink peppercorns, Ginger.
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a bowl combine all dry ingredients and any of the flavor compliments you may have chose. Place butter in dry mix sprinkle vanilla over butter , With pastry cutter, blend in butter to a rough course meal. I like to use my fingers at this point to make sure all the flour is coated with the butter. Press into a 9X13 pan going slightly up the side about a ½ inch. Poke a few holes in bottom crust with a fork , Bake for 20-25 minutes till golden brown around the edges. Check to be sure crust doesn't puff up , if it does just gently press down with the back of the fork .

Step 2.
The filling

2 large eggs room temperature whisked with 1 tablespoon of sugar till well blended.
In a separate bowl:
2 teaspoons lemon zest (one large lemon)
½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice 120 mls. (approx. 3 lemons)
¾ cup granulated sugar 160 grams
½ teaspoon kosher salt 3 grams
1 teaspoon of vanilla 5 ml.
1 stick of unsalted butter 115 grams cubed.

In a double boiler or a metal bowl over a hot pot of water, stir butter, sugar, lemon juice, zest, salt and vanilla until completely melted and creamy, remove from heat. Temper the egg mixture by whisking in every so slowly 4 tablespoons of the warm mixture one at a time. After all 4 tablespoons are incorporated into the eggs , slowly pour egg mixture into warm lemon butter mixture whisking the whole time. Mix until well incorporated. Immediately pour mixture over hot crust and return to 350 oven to bake off for 22 minutes. Let cool completely before placing in the refrigerator best served cold. Decorate with confectioners sugar and edible flowers and herbs for beautiful presentation. Makes 24 squares.

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