



KING of early summer

Susie Carter celebrates a seasonal favourite
with her asparagus and bacon tart

INGREDIENTS

Serves: six

- 320g ready-rolled puff pastry
- 1 tbsp rapeseed oil
- 75g bacon lardons
- 1 large onion, quartered and thinly sliced
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 lemon, zest finely grated
- 1 large egg
- 100g crème fraîche
- 275g asparagus spears

METHOD

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan), gas 6 and take the pastry out of the fridge.

2 Heat the rapeseed oil in a frying pan and fry the lardons and onion for eight minutes over a medium heat, stirring occasionally. Lower the heat, then add the garlic and lemon zest and fry for two minutes. Season with a little salt and pepper, then take the pan off the heat.

3 Unroll the pastry and lay it on a baking tray, leaving the baking paper underneath. Score a 2cm border round the edge of the pastry with a sharp knife, but don't cut all the way through.

4 Lightly beat the egg in a jug, then brush the outer border of the pastry with egg. Add the crème fraîche to the remaining egg in the jug and beat until smooth.

5 Spoon the cooled onions and lardons onto the pastry and spread them out. Spoon over the crème fraîche mixture in an even layer, leaving the border clear.

6 Roll the asparagus in the onion pan to coat it with any residual oil, then season with salt and pepper. Arrange on top of the tart.

7 Bake the tart for 20 minutes or until the pastry is crisp and browned underneath. Serve hot or at room temperature.



Susie Carter SUSIE'S KITCHEN

There's something a bit celebratory about a pie or a tart. People get the impression that you've gone to a lot of trouble, but it's so easy these days if you've got a packet of ready-rolled puff pastry up your sleeve.

This month's recipe showcases the king of early summer vegetables: Asparagus. I've teamed it with flavour-enhancing bacon and given it a lift with lemon zest. Enjoy the tart warm from the oven for an al fresco lunch at home, or cool it to room temperature and raise your picnic to the next level.

FIND IT IN HAMPSHIRE

Asparagus:

Durleighmarsh Farm Shop,
Petersfield, 01730 821626;
durleighmarshfarmshop.co.uk

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Bacon: Tatchbury
Manor Farm, New
Forest, 07786 697919;
tatchburymanorfarm.co.uk

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Eggs: Kings Somborne
Free Range Eggs, King's
Somborne, 01794 388297
Find them at Hampshire
Farmers' Markets



Leon Reilly BERRY BROS. & RUDD

Asparagus season is always a treat. It's one of the few ingredients that remains truly seasonal, even today, and feels all the more

special for it. I fill my boots with as much as I can while it's at its best. It is notoriously a little difficult to pair with wine, but perhaps unjustly so. It's a strong flavour, so does tend to dominate dishes, even when a relatively small component – let alone when it's centrestage like in Susie's beautiful tart. It demands a partner that is similarly green – grassy, herbaceous wines with plenty of acidity. Sauvignon Blanc – especially from its heartland in the

Loire, but also the herbaceous styles found in Chile – are a classic match, as is the sommelier favourite Grüner Veltliner. The Bacchus grape works well too – and there's a nice symmetry with something equally English. I've gone for a Loire Sauvignon, an Austrian Grüner and an Italian white – a Verdicchio under a pseudonym: all three have bright, fresh flavours that will stand up to those bright green spears, while also cutting through the richness of the puff pastry and crème fraîche base.

At the time of writing Berry Bros. & Rudd's Warehouse Shop in Basingstoke was closed because of the lockdown, but customers can still buy online at bbr.com



WINES TO MATCH

Leon's choice to pair with Susie's seasonal tart



**2018 Reully
Blanc, Les
Pierres Plates,
Denis Jamain,
Loire - £15.95:**

Reully is one of the Loire's smallest appellations, overshadowed by its famous neighbours Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé. But it makes some fantastic Sauvignon Blanc (not to mention Pinot Gris and Noir). This example from Denis Jamain is superbly mineral, with deliciously muted yet pinpoint aromatics, with green apple, limey citrus and saline notes.



**2017 Montunale,
Lugana,
Montonale,
Lombardy,
Italy - £17.50:**

Lugana, on the edge of Lake Garda, is home to the Turbiana grape, the local name for Verdicchio. This wine has some richer stone-fruit notes that perfectly complement layers of citrus, herbal and mineral aromas. A bit rounder in body than the Sauvignon Blanc, but with vibrant acidity, it will match Susie's tart.



**2018 Grüner
Veltliner,
Wagram
Terrassen,
Josef Ehmoser,
Austria - £14.95:**

The Grüner Veltliner grape is known for its versatility in partnering food. This example comes from the Wagram region in Austria, northwest of Vienna, producing a wine that is racy and mineral with Grüner's trademark white-pepper spice overlaying zesty orchard fruit. It has more than enough zip to work here.