Apricot and Almond Tarts

Makes approx. 27 small tarts

Fresh from the Garden: apricots, almonds, eggs

Notes for volunteers:
- The almond crème base for these tarts is called frangipane. It helps to soak up juices from the fruit.
- The apricots can be substituted with other fruit. Cut the pastry in quarters for larger fruit slices.
- Tarts can be served hot or cold.
- Focus Skill: Glazing tarts before baking.

Ingredients
Apricot halves (fresh, bottled or canned)
3 sheets puff pastry
1 pinch salt
2 tbsp sieved apricot jam
60 g butter softened
¼ cup caster sugar
¾ cup ground almonds
2 eggs
2-3 drops vanilla extract

Method
1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Cut the sheets of puff pastry into thirds horizontally and vertically to create 9 squares from each sheet. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Arrange the squares of puff pastry on the tray with a small gap between them.
3. To make the almond cream, use a hand mixer to beat together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
4. Add the almonds, 1 egg and the vanilla. Mix into the butter and sugar mix.
5. Lightly beat the other egg with the pinch of salt. Use a pastry brush to paint the puff pastry with the egg wash.
6. Place a teaspoon of almond cream in the centre of each pastry square. Use the back of the spoon to smooth it out a bit, ensuring that you leave a border of pastry around the edge.
7. Place an apricot half, cut side down, on top of the almond cream.
8. Bake for 10 – 15 minutes until the pastry puffs and turns golden brown.
9. Use a pastry brush to brush the apricot with the sieved jam while still warm.

Recipe Reference: Adapted from a recipe by Stephanie Alexander.