

Cherry Quark Strudel

The wild, wet weather we have been having might mean a short cherry season. Much of the fruit may be split due to rain and will be dumped and remaining fruit may have a shorter shelf life. Premium cherries will command a higher price as a result but other cherries are still good eating but best stored in the fridge or made into a compote for a Christmas dessert such as a cherry strudel. Making a traditional strudel is a bit of an art, requiring a little practice in stretching the dough to paper thinness in order to be rolled over the the filling multiple times. Bought filo pastry does the job quite well but is not quite *echt*, being very thin and brittle as well as tasting a little different. You could go the bought puff pastry route which is fine too but if you really want something genuinely Austrian and don't want to make the pastry from scratch the closest I have found to the real deal is [Irene's Traditional Greek Pastry](#) found in the freezer compartment of supermarkets. I thaw it overnight in the fridge and then leave it out all day until it is at room temperature, soft and pliable. You need to do this so it can stretch without breaking. With two people it is easier to roll it out over a old flour-dusted tablecloth and then using your hands underneath the dough stretch it out to cover the surface, about one metre square or thereabouts. For the filling I use a mix of pitted cherries lightly poached in their own juice and a traditional Austrian pastry cream made with a mix of quark cream cheese, sugar and eggs. The cherry strudel can be baked in advance and reheated for 10 minutes at 180°C before serving, making it a practical Christmas dinner dessert.

Cherry Quark Strudel

serves 12-14

Cherry Compote

approx. 8 cups pitted fresh cherries See [Cherry Season Cake](#)

Quark (Topfen) Filling

- 500 g quark (I recommend [Schulz Organic Quark](#))
- 4 eggs, separated
- 100 g caster sugar
- zest of a lemon
- 4 tbs semolina

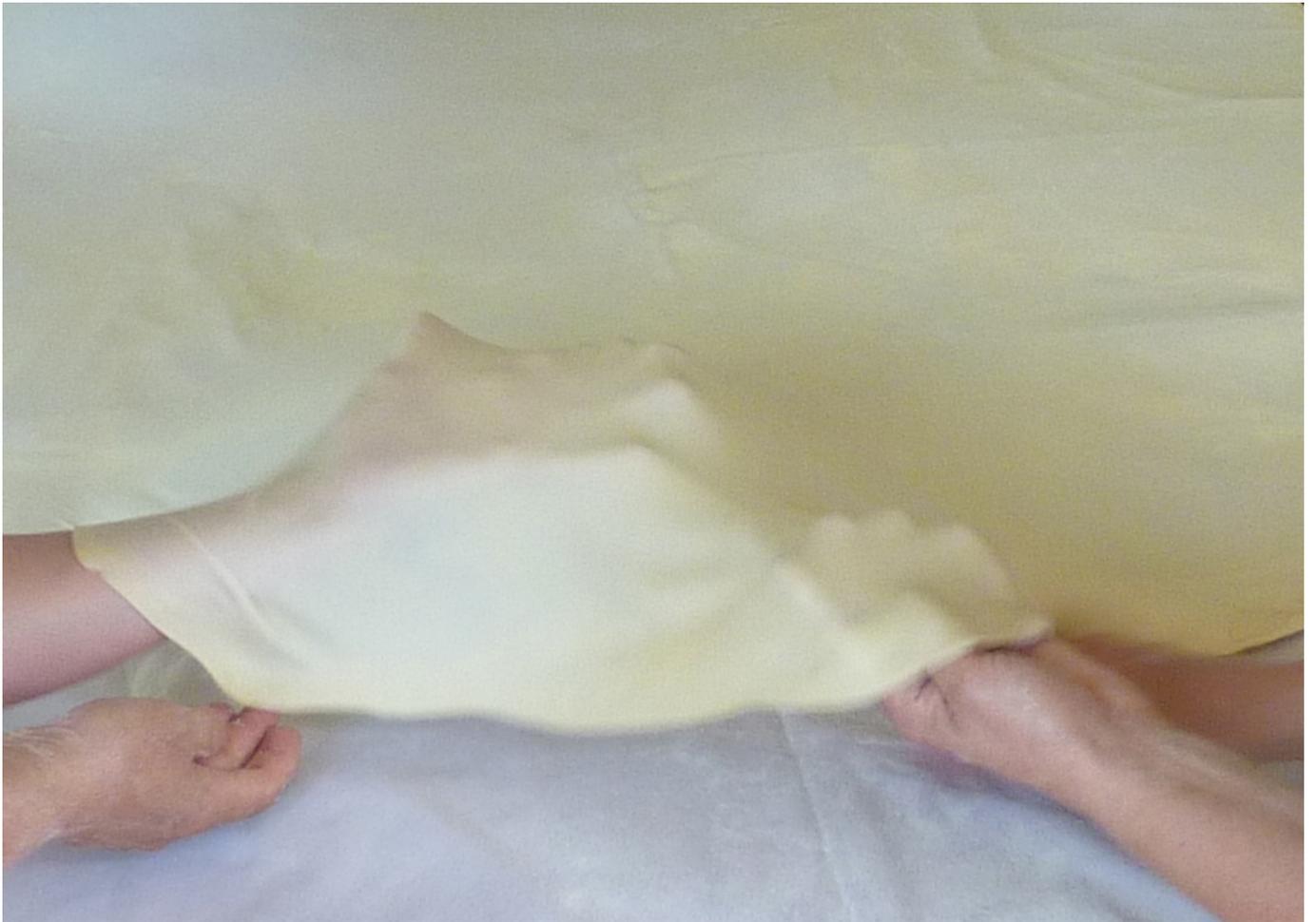
For The Strudel

- 1/2 packet of [Irene's Traditional Greek Pastry](#) (left to soften completely at room temperature)
- 125 g unsalted butter, melted
- approximately 2 handfuls toasted bread crumbs or panko

Prepare the fresh cherry compote ahead of time and make sure it is chilled.

To make the quark filling: Beat the egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff and set aside. Beat the egg yolks with the sugar and lemon zest until thick and pale. Add the quark and beat until combined. Fold in the egg white and semolina.

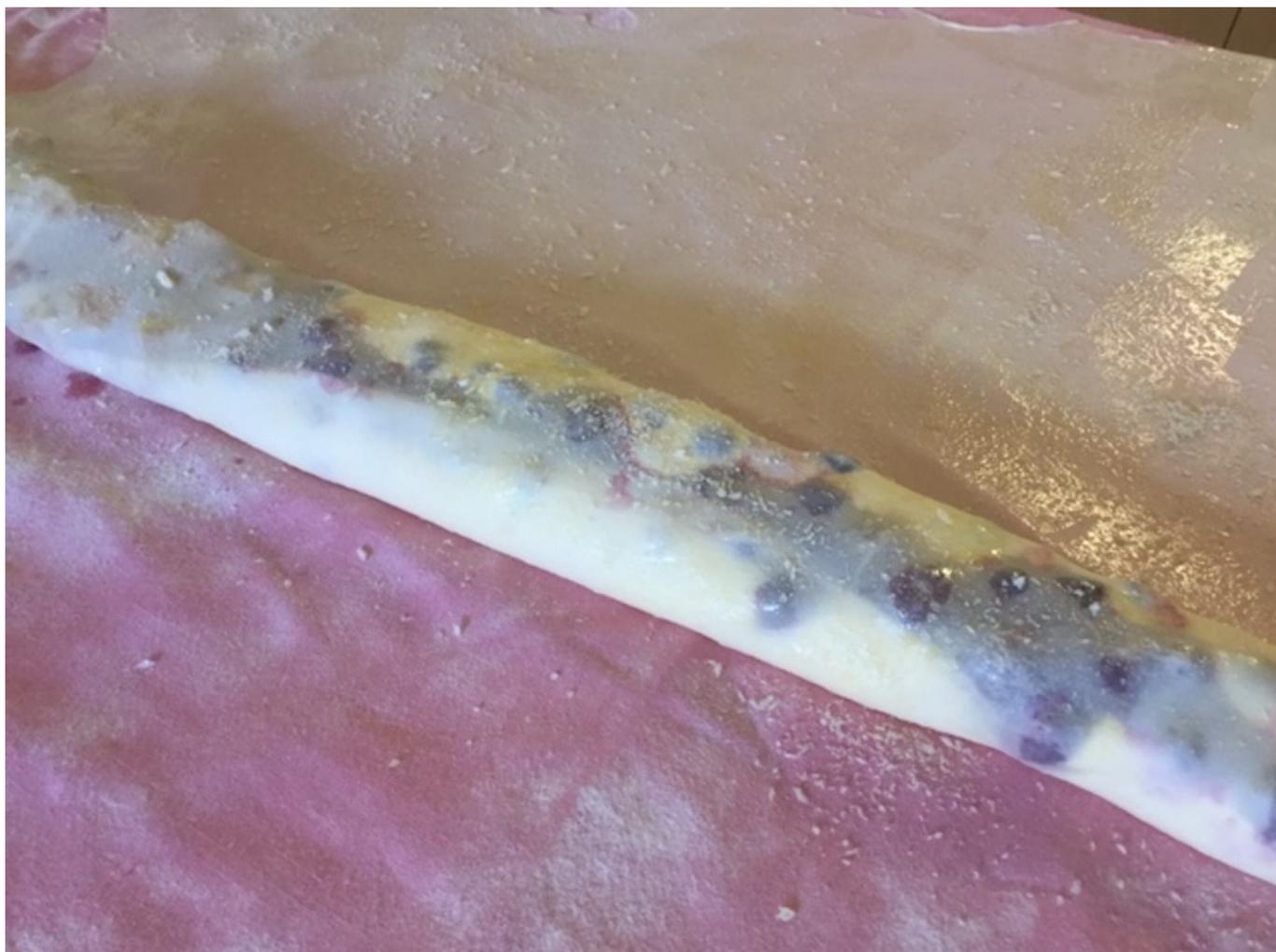
To assemble the strudel: Preheat the oven to 180°C. Melt the butter in a small saucepan. Spread an old tablecloth or sheet on the table and dust with flour. Roll out the pastry on the dusted cloth as much as possible, working from the middle to the edges. Brush lightly with melted butter. Remove any watches and rings that may catch on the pastry and using the pads of your fingers gently stretch the dough from underneath, so that covers approximately a metre square of the table top. Doing this with two people is easier.



Trim the thick edges of the pastry with a small knife or scissors and discard. Brush the stretched out pastry with melted butter and sprinkle with breadcrumbs. Place the quark filling in a band along one end of the pastry and place the cherries on top.



Using the tablecloth, fold the filled end over onto the pastry and roll it over again. Brush the top with melted butter and sprinkle with breadcrumbs. Continue this process until you reach the end.



Place the long roll on a baking sheet lined with baking paper, laying it in a horseshoe shape to fit the sheet. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes at 180°C, then rotate the baking sheet for even baking and turn down the oven to 160°C and bake for a further 20 minutes. Cool then cut into portions dusted with icing sugar. Serve with whipped cream.