LEMON PIES with SWISS MERINGUE

INGREDIENTS

* ½ tsp vanilla extract, optional
* 95g egg whites (about 3)
* 110g sugar

METHOD

1. In a medium-sized, heatproof bowl, whisk together the egg whites and sugar.
2. Place the bowl over a small pan with simmering water, making sure the water doesn't touch the bowl.
3. Keep whisking the mixture until the sugar has dissolved. You can easily check whether the sugar has dissolved by rubbing a bit of the mixture between your fingers; the mixture shouldn't feel grainy. If you're not worried about salmonella, you can take the mixture off the heat at this point.
4. If you want to pasteurize the meringue, keep whisking until the mixture reaches a temperature of 71°C/160°F. Once the meringue reaches the desired temperature, take it off the heat.
5. Using a hand held or a stand mixer, beat the warm mixture until the meringue holds the desired peak (soft, medium or stiff) and has cooled to room temperature.

LEMON PIES

INGREDIENTS

* 3 SHEETS short crust pastry, cut into 6cm rounds (make 28-30)
* 6 Tbsp lemon juice + 2tsp lemon zest
* 2 egg yolks + 2 eggs
* 150g sugar
* 90g butter, cold diced

METHOD

1. Heat oven to 190oC
2. Whisk eggs and sugar in a saucepan, heat over low heat with butter and lemon juice. Whisk until thickened (May take a few minutes). Pass through a sieve and let cool.
3. Line the muffin trays with pastry rounds, prick with a fork a couple of times and bake for 10 - 15 minutes. Let cool and fill with chilled lemon curd. Top with a spoon of the meringue and serve.