

A BIT OF TART & TANG TO WAKE-UP YOUR TASTE BUDS!

Key lime pie is an all-time classic American dessert pie that has been a beloved Florida staple for decades and has won over millions of hearts. This pie is so deeply entrenched in the Sunshine State that in 2006, the Florida Legislature voted to name key lime pie as the state's official pie. Between the crunchy crust, tangy custard filling, and the essential silky whipped-cream topping - not many desserts can rival the unique and refreshing appeal of key lime pie. The pie has a buttery biscuit base with condensed milk, egg yolks, and fresh lime zest. This citrusy indulgence is the perfect summery dessert that will make you feel like you took a bite off a sparkling summer's day.

By Imara de Chickera

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The good news is that now we can enjoy this refreshing and authentic dessert in Colombo with Tart & Tang, the latest online dessert store in town. Key lime pie is the *raison d'être* for this unique store that has gained a loyal following in a short time. Intrigued by the promises of tangy delight, showcased on the store's eye-catching Instagram page with its refreshing and mouthwatering captures, we spoke to Ashendri Amaratunge, the Founder and Masterchef of Tart & Tang.

Having hopped onto the dessert bandwagon with flourish and aplomb, Ashendri elaborates

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on her ambition for the store, saying, 'I want to provide my customers with desserts that are fairly uncommon and not run-of-the mill. I like to think out-of-the-box and do things a little differently. Speaking about how it all started, she said, "When my sister came back to Sri Lanka from the US on holiday, she had a craving for key lime pie.

We couldn't really locate it, so I decided to make it for her with the extra time I had on my hands due to the COVID-19 lockdown. My sister absolutely loved it and she was impressed by the authenticity of the taste, which she had grown to know and love during her stay in the US. This boosted my baking confidence, and I started making it for my family and friends. The rave reviews I received from everyone who tasted it was incredibly encouraging. We were at home for so long that I took to baking more often, and as a result, my confidence grew in correlation to the feedback I got. I baked sporadically when I was younger, but traveling overseas to do my degree didn't give me much time to continue. However, the lockdown period blessed me with so much time on my hands. My passion for baking increased along with my confidence and knowledge that people actually loved what I made, especially my key lime pie, which was such a big hit."

This newfound confidence in her dessert-making prowess resulted in Ashendri being inspired and motivated to start her own business venture - the aptly named Tart & Tang.

Her desserts appeal to all age groups and have enticed a wide array of clientele from as young as sixteen-year old teens to grandmothers. Her culinary masterpieces are a favorite feature at elegant high teas, lunches, dinners, and birthday parties and are also sent as delectable birthday gifts.

Her bespoke and rare repertoire of desserts includes the banoffee pie, a classic English dessert that gets its name from the ingredients used - banana and toffee made out of caramel. It is absolutely delicious and is served in a jar.

"My favorite dessert is the S'mores cheesecake," said Ashendri, highlighting her latest newcomer to the Tart & Tang menu. This dessert is not too sweet and is well-balanced with its dark chocolate and cheesecake filling.

It has turned into quite the crowd-pleaser since it has been introduced."

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Ashendri takes her own sweet time to add new desserts to the Tart & Tang Menu. She perfects her product for over three to four months until it reaches a level of pure precision. Only then is it added on, ensuring that the divine desserts are flawless and absolutely delicious. This showcases the perfectionism practiced at Tart & Tang and reveals the secret behind Ashendri's truly satisfied customer base. Ashendri has plans to expand her home-based business and launch her bespoke desserts in plush local cafes. The next step will then be to eventually open her own dessert store.

If you are utterly tired of the endless influx of cupcakes, biscuit puddings, and generic sweets on offer and are craving an intriguing and refreshing dessert to pique your bored taste buds, look no further. Tart & Tang, with its thoughtfully crafted, decadent desserts, will surely hit the spot.

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S'mores cheesecake - the latest addition to Tart & Tang is a wonderful delight!

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Ashendri Amaratunge, the Founder and Masterchef of Tart & Tang.

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