

Great Pandemic Baking Gang Recipes

Pies - November 16, 2022

Bourbon Chocolate Pecan Pie

½ cup light brown sugar, lightly packed
½ cup granulated sugar
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp salt
8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, melted and slightly cooled
2 extra-large eggs. (I used three eggs, smaller than extra-large)
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
2 ½ Tbs good bourbon
1 ¼ cups semisweet chocolate chips (I used 1 cup)
One crust pie shell (purchased or home-made). For a 9-inch pie plate
Good quality vanilla ice cream, such as Haagen-Dazs

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place an oven rack in the center of the oven.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine the brown sugar, granulated sugar, flour and 1 Tsp salt. In a smaller bowl whisk together the butter, eggs, vanilla and bourbon. Pour the liquid ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir with a rubber spatula until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips and pecans.

Place the pie crust on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper. Crimp the edge of the pie shell with a floured fork or design of your choice. Pour the filling into the pie crust and smooth the top. Bake for 35-40 minutes on the prepared rack until the filling is evenly golden brown on top and is as firm in the middle as it is at the edge. (see Nancy's note below)

Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Serve in wedges with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Nancy's notes: I used three smaller eggs instead of 2 extra-large. I cut the chocolate chips by ¼ cup. I made my own pie crust and used a regular pie plate. I cooked the pie the whole 40 minutes, but it was still slightly jiggly in the center. It was just fine after it cooled. I'm glad that I did not cook it longer.

I used a pastry recipe from Kate McDermott.

1 1/4 cups flour
4 tablespoons of very cold vegetable shortening (I put it in the freezer after measuring)
4 tablespoons of very cold butter
¼ cup (about) ice water, more if it is needed
1/2 tsp salt
Additional flour for rolling out the dough.

Put all ingredients except the ice water in a large bowl.

With clean hands or a pastry blender, using an up and down motion, combine the fats with the flour until it forms lumps the size of peas and almonds

Sprinkle ice water over the mixture and stir lightly with a fork.

Squeeze a handful of dough to see if it holds together. Mix in more water if necessary.

On a sheet of plastic wrap combine the dough into a chubby disk, pulling up the sides of the plastic wrap and avoid handling too much. Wrap the plastic wrap around the dough and refrigerate for about an hour. (I rolled the dough after 45 minutes and it was perfect)

Roll out on a lightly floured pastry cloth to a circle larger than the diameter of the pie pan. Lay the pie plate onto the dough and cut in a circle slightly larger than the pie plate. Lay the dough gently into the pie plate and press lightly against the sides using a ball of the extra dough. Fold over and crimp.

Nancy Leventon – November 16, 2023



Cranberry Meyer Lemon Pie with Gingersnap Crust

Crust ingredients:

2 c. gingersnap cookie crumbs
6 T. unsalted butter, melted
3 T. light brown sugar
¼ tsp. salt

Filling ingredients:

1 12-oz package fresh cranberries
1 ½ c. granulated sugar
3 large eggs
2 large egg yolks
2 tsp. Meyer lemon zest
½ c. Meyer lemon juice
Pinch of kosher salt
¾ c. unsalted butter, room temperature, cut into pieces

Sugared Cranberries ingredients:

1 ¼ c. fresh cranberries
1 c. granulated sugar, divided
1 tsp. Meyer lemon zest



Instructions:

Crust

- Preheat oven to 350.
- Put into food processor – cookie crumbs, butter, brown sugar and salt. Pulse until the crumbs are moistened.
- Pour into deep 9-inch pie pan. Use a measuring cup to press the crust firmly into the bottom and up the sides.
- Bake for 12-13 minutes or until crisp and slightly darkened.
- Crust can be baked up to 1 day ahead. Wrap tightly and refrigerate until needed.

Filling

- Add cranberries, 1 c. sugar and ¼ c. water to a saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil. Reduce to simmer and cook until the berries burst open, and the mixture thickens, about 15-20 minutes. The texture should resemble cranberry sauce. Puree in the food processor (or blender) until it's as smooth as possible. This may take a good 3-4 minutes. Use caution blending hot liquids
- Add the eggs, egg yolks, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt and remaining ½ c. sugar to the food processor and pulse a few time to combine.
- Scrape the mixture into a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water. (Don't let the bowl touch the water.) at about medium heat.
- Stir the mixture constantly with a rubber spatula until it thickens up like a curd and nicely coats the back of the spoon – about 15-20 minutes or until a candy thermometer reaches 165 degrees. Don't rush this step – it's essential to getting the filling to set up.
- Remove the pan from the heat. Set a fine meshed strainer over a bowl, then pour the curd through. Press with a rubber spatula to make sure you get as much of the curd

through as possible while leaving the bits of cranberry skin and coagulated egg in the strainer. Let cool until just barely warm.

- Beat the curd with an electric mixer on medium-high speed, adding softened butter one piece at a time. Be sure each piece of butter is fully incorporated before adding in the next piece.
- Continue beating the curd until all of the butter has been incorporated and it looks new shades lighter in color – about 6 minutes.
- Pour the curd into the prepared crust and smooth out the top. Gently bang the pie dish on the counter to remove any air bubbles, then chill until firm at least 8 hours or overnight is best.
- The pie can be made 2 days ahead. Cover and keep chilled until ready to serve.

Sugared Cranberries:

- Boil $\frac{1}{2}$ c. granulated sugar and $\frac{1}{2}$ c. water in a small saucepan until the sugar is dissolved. Lower the heat, then add the cranberries and cook until just starting to soften, about 1 minute. Use a perforated spoon to transfer the berries to a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. Let sit for 30 minutes until the cranberries feel tacky.
- Mix the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar and lemon zest in a small bowl. Roll the cranberries in the sugar mixture until coated.
- Place the sugared cranberries on a plate to set up for about 5 minutes. Can be made up to 2 hours in advance. They cannot be made the day before.

Jeanne's Notes

Crust: I could not find any gingersnap cookies to buy so I used Molasses Cookies instead. I made them into crumbs and used only 2 T. melted butter – no added sugar. The crust turned out good.

Filling: I zapped the filling in the microwave 1 minute at a time, stirring after each minute, instead of putting it over simmering water. It turned out very good. I did not put the filling through a strainer – more fiber the better! But neither of us found any bits of cranberries or lemon zest.

Sugared Cranberries: I didn't do this – used crumbs and whipped cream for decorations instead.

Jeanne Nygard – November 16, 2022; I found this recipe overly sweet and the lemon overpowered the cranberries. If I make it again I would decrease the sugar and lemon juice but at this point, I'm not planning to make it again.

Old Fashioned Paradise Pumpkin Pie

Ingredients:

- 1 (9-inch) pie shell
- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
- ¼ c. white sugar
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 egg beaten
- 1 ¼ c. pumpkin puree
- 1 c. evaporated milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ¼ c. packed brown sugar
- ¼ c. white sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 T. all-purpose flour
- 2 T. brown sugar
- 2 T. butter, softened
- ½ c. chopped pecans

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- To make Cheesecake Layer: in a medium mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Beat in ¼ c. sugar, then add vanilla extract and 1 egg. Beat mixture until light and smooth. Chill mixture for 30 minutes, then spread into pastry shell.
- To make Pumpkin Layer: In a large bowl, combine pumpkin puree, evaporated milk, 2 eggs, ¼ c. brown sugar, ¼ c. white sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Mix until thoroughly combined.
- Pour pumpkin mixture over pumpkin mixture over cream cheese layer. Cover edges of crust with aluminum foil.
- Bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes. Remove foil from edges and bake an additional 25 minutes.
- To make Pecan Streusel Layer: While pie is in the oven, combine flour and 2 T. brown sugar in a small bowl. Mix well, then add softened butter or margarine and stir until ingredients are combined. Mix in pecans.
- After pie has been in oven for 50 minutes, remove and sprinkle pecan streusel evenly over the top. Bake for a additional 10 to 15 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Pear Berry Pie

A Kate McDermott Recipe

Ingredients for crust:

- 2 c. (190g) all-purpose flour
- 2 T. granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. aluminum-free baking powder
- ½ c. (120g) cream cheese, chilled and cut into small pieces
- 12 T. (180g) salted or unsalted butter, chilled and cut into ½-inch cubes
- 1 T. apple cider vinegar (Bragg's or another artisan apple cider vinegar)
- 3 T. (45 ml) water

Procedure:

By Hand -

- In a large bowl, place flour, sugar, salt, and baking powder and mix with a fork, whisk, or clean fingers.
- Sprinkle the vinegar and water over the mixture and mix with a fork or your fingers.
- Lightly squeeze and press the dough until it all holds together and form into a ball or rectangle.
- Keep the dough whole or divide it in half, wrap in plastic wrap, and chill for about an hour before rolling.

By Food Processor

- Fit food processor with the metal blade. Place the flour, sugar, salt, and baking powder in the Food Processor's bowl. Pulse two or three times to combine.
- Add the butter and cream cheese, pulse 10 to 15 times until it looks like coarse meal.
- Add the vinegar and water and pulse 5 more times.
- Turn the dough into a medium bowl and form into a disc with your hands. Wrap in plastic and place in fridge for an hour before rolling.

Ingredients: Filling

- 5 large (about 5 cups) ripe pears (skin on)
- 1 c. (about 145g.) blackberries, fresh or frozen (do not thaw)
- ½ c. (100g) granulated sugar
- ¼ c. (56g) brown sugar, packed
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¾ tsp. cinnamon
- 2 gratings of nutmeg (or a pinch)

Procedure

- Slice the pears into ½-inch (1-cm) slices or chunk them up into bite size pieces.
- In a large mixing bowl, place all the ingredients, except for the butter and sugar topping, and mix lightly until most of the surfaces are covered.
- Pour the mixture into an unbaked piecrust, and dot with butter.
- Roll out the remaining dough, lay it over the fruit, and cut 5 to 6 vents on top, or make a lattice top. Trim the excess dough from the edges and crimp.
- Cover the pie and chill in the refrigerator while you preheat the oven to 425F

HOW TO BAKE THE PIE THE 20-20-20 WAY

The full bake will take *about* one hour, during which time you'll set your timer for three 20-minute intervals. Why? Over many years of baking, I've found that if sugar goes on toward the later part of the bake instead of at the beginning there is less chance for a burned top.

First 20:

Place the pie in an oven preheated to 425°F (220°C) and bake for 20 minutes.

Second 20:

Turn down the oven to 375°F (190°C) and bake for 20 more minutes.

Third 20:

Open the oven, carefully remove the pie, set it on a heat-safe surface, and close the oven to keep the heat inside.

Quickly brush the top of the pie with egg wash and then sprinkle lightly with sugar. Return the pie to the oven and continue baking at 375°F (190°C) for the final 20 minutes.

Rosemary Johnston – November 16, 2022

Grandma's Can't Fail Pie Crust

Makes 3 large crust or 4 smaller ones.

4 c. flour
1 T. sugar
2 tsp. salt
1 ¼ c. shortening, Crisco, butter, margarine....
1 T. vinegar
1 large egg
½ c. cold water

Sift dry ingredients together; cut in shortening with 2 knives or pastry blender until size of small peas. Mix water, vinegar, and egg together. Add to dry ingredients and work together until moist and can form a ball. (You may have to add a little more water or a little more flour.) Roll out for crusts. This dough stays light and flaky even after several "rolling-outs."

Jeanne Nygard – 11/17/22 My Welsh Grandma's recipe.

PUMPKIN PECAN PIE

Prep time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 5 hrs 15 minutes.

FOR THE CRUST

- 1/2 c. (1 stick) butter, cut into 1/2" pieces
- 1 1/2 c. all-purpose flour, plus more for surface
- 1 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 4 tbsp. ice water (or more, if needed)

Step 1

Place butter and flour into freezer for 30 minutes before starting crust process. (You want them SUPER cold.)

Step 2

In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, and salt. (Alternately, you can do this in a food processor.) Add butter and, using your hands, mix together until pea-sized and some slightly larger pieces form. Add vinegar and then ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until dough starts to come together and is moist but not wet and sticky (test by squeezing some with your fingers). Mixture will be crumbly.

Step 3

Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and form into a ball. Flatten into a disk (making sure there are no/minimal cracks).

Step 4

Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until dough is very cold, at least 2 hours or up to overnight.

Step 5

Preheat oven to 425° and lightly grease a deep 9" pie dish with cooking spray.

Step 6

On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough into a 12" circle. Drape over pie dish and gently press to fit, making sure there are no air bubbles. Trim edge to 1" and tuck overhang under itself and crimp edges. With a fork, lightly prick bottom of crust. Refrigerate 30 minutes or freeze 10 minutes.

Step 7

Line crust with parchment paper and fill with dried beans or pie weights. Bake 10 minutes, then remove parchment and weights and bake for 10 minutes more. Reduce heat to 350°.

FOR THE PUMPKIN LAYER

- 1 1/2 c. pumpkin puree
- 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 3/4 c. packed brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. cloves
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg

FOR THE PECAN LAYER

- 4 tbsp. butter, melted
- 1/2 c. packed brown sugar
- 1/2 c. corn syrup
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1 1/2 c. pecan halves

Step 8

Meanwhile, make fillings: In a large bowl, whisk pumpkin puree, heavy cream, sugar, and eggs together. Add vanilla and spices and stir to combine.

Step 9

In another large bowl, whisk together melted butter, sugar, corn syrup, vanilla, salt, and eggs. Add pecans and stir until well coated.

Step 10

Pour pumpkin filling on top of parbaked crust and smooth top. Gently, pour pecan filling over pumpkin.

Step 11

Bake pie until filling is only slightly jiggly in center, 45 minutes. If crust starts to darken too much, place foil loosely around crust and continue baking.

Step 12

Let cool at room temp for 1 hour, then refrigerate until ready to serve.

<https://www.delish.com/holiday-recipes/thanksgiving/a28649822/pumpkin-pecan-pie-recipe/>

Rena Seegmiller November 16, 2022 - I decided that the pie did not cook enough, as the center was very soft and not well set. After eating several pieces, this pie was not a "winner" and I will not make this pie again.