



THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A FOOD BLOG

Apple Brandy Hand Pies (adapted from Smitten Kitchen and from Cooks Illustrated's apple pie recipe in *The New Best Recipe*)

Makes about 14 pies

Dough:

1¼ cups (6 ounces) all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon salt
½ tablespoon sugar
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces
¼ cup Greek yogurt or sour cream
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
¼ cup ice water

Filling:

2 large apples, peeled, cored, diced into ¼-inch cubes
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon apple (or regular) brandy
¼ teaspoon lemon zest
¼ cups (1.75 ounces) sugar
2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
⅛ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
⅛ teaspoon ground allspice

1. To make the pastry, in a bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt. Place the butter in another bowl. Place both bowls in the freezer for 1 hour. Remove the bowls from the freezer and make a well in the center of the flour. Add the butter to the well and, using a pastry blender, cut it in until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Make another well in the center. In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, lemon juice and water and add half of this mixture to the well. With your fingertips, mix in the liquid until large lumps form. Remove the large lumps and repeat with the remaining liquid and flour-butter mixture. Pat the lumps into a ball; do not overwork the dough. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour. If preparing ahead of time, the dough can be stored at this point for up to one month in the freezer.

2. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out one half of the dough to ⅛-inch thickness. Using a 4-inch-round biscuit cutter, cut seven circles out of the rolled dough. Transfer the circles to a parchment-lined baking sheet, and place in the refrigerator to chill for about 30 minutes.

3. Toss the apples with the lemon juice and zest. In a medium bowl, mix the sugar, flour, salt and spices. Toss the dry ingredients with the apples.

4. Remove the chilled dough from the refrigerator, and let stand at room temperature until just pliable, 2 to 3 minutes. Spoon about 1 tablespoon of filling onto one half of each circle of dough. Quickly brush cold water around the circumference of the dough, and fold it in half so the other side comes down over the filling, creating a semicircle. Seal the hand pie, and make a decorative edge by pressing the edges of the dough together with

the back of a fork. Repeat the process with remaining dough and filling. Place the hand pies back on the parchment-lined baking sheet, and return to the refrigerator to chill for another 30 minutes.

5. Heat the oven to 375 degrees. Remove the chilled hand pies from the refrigerator, cut 3 small slits in each and lightly brush with the egg yolk wash. Sprinkle sanding sugar generously over the pies. Bake until the hand pies are golden brown and just slightly cracked, about 20 minutes. Remove the pies from the oven; let cool slightly before serving.