

THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



Triple Coconut Cream Pie (adapted from Tom Douglas)

Makes one 9-inch pie

Crust:

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (5.4 ounces) all-purpose flour
½ cup (2.1 ounces) sweetened shredded coconut
2 teaspoons sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
⅓ cup ice water, or more as needed

Pastry cream:

½ cup heavy cream
1½ cups whole milk
2 cups sweetened shredded coconut
1 vanilla bean, halved lengthwise, seeds scraped out and reserved
¼ teaspoon salt
2 large eggs
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (4.4 ounces) sugar
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, softened

Assembly:

2 cups heavy whipping cream, chilled
¼ cup (1.75 ounces) sugar
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 ounces unsweetened “chip” or large-shred coconut
Chunks of white chocolate (4 to 6 ounces, to make 2 ounces of curls)

1. For the crust: In a food processor, pulse to combine the flour, coconut, sugar, and salt until combined. Add the diced butter; pulse until the butter is broken into pea-sized bits, 6-8 one-second pulses. Stop the machine and pour in about half of the water; pulse twice, then add the remaining water. Pulse 3-4 more times, then test the dough by gently pressing it between your fingers; it should just hold together; if it doesn't, add a couple teaspoons water and pulse to combine again. Line a wide, shallow bowl with a large sheet of plastic wrap; transfer the dough to lined bowl. Pull the plastic wrap around the dough, then flatten it to a round about 1-inch high. Chill for 30 minutes to an hour before rolling. (The dough can be prepared a day in advance, and stored, wrapped tightly, in the refrigerator.)

2. Unwrap the round of dough and place it on a lightly floured work surface. Dust the dough lightly with flour, then cover with a sheet of plastic wrap. Roll the dough into a 12- to 13-inch circle about ⅛-inch thick, adding more flour if it begins to stick. Transfer the rolled dough onto a 9-inch pie pan. Trim any excess to a 1- to 1½-inch overhang. Turn the dough under along the rim of the pie pan and use your fingers to flute the edge. Cover with plastic wrap and chill the unbaked pie crust at least an hour before baking.

3. Heat the oven to 400°F. Place a sheet of aluminum foil or parchment paper in the pie crust and fill the cavity with dried beans or pie weights. Bake the crust until the edge is just golden, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven, lift off the foil and weights, and return the crust to the oven. Bake until the bottom of the crust shows golden-brown patches, 10 to 12 minutes more. Transfer the crust to a cooling rack and cool completely before filling.

4. For the pastry cream: In a medium saucepan, combine the heavy cream, milk, coconut, vanilla seeds and pod, and salt. Place the saucepan over medium-high heat and stir the mixture occasionally until it begins to steam and tiny bubbles start to form around the pan's edges. (But don't let it come to a boil.) Remove the pan from the heat.

5. In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, and flour until well combined. Whisking continually, slowly add about one-third of the scalded milk into the egg mixture. Pour the warmed egg mixture to the milk and coconut mixture in the saucepan. Place the pan over medium-high heat and whisk until the mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Keep whisking until the pastry cream is very thick, 4 to 5 minutes more. Remove the saucepan from the heat. Add the butter and whisk until it melts. Remove and discard the vanilla pod. Transfer the pastry cream to a bowl, then place it over another bowl filled with ice water. Stir occasionally until it is cool. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface of the pastry cream to prevent a crust from forming, and refrigerate until cold, about an hour. The cream will thicken as it cools.

6. To finish the pie: Heat the oven to 350°F. Spread the coconut chips over a baking sheet. Bake the chips, stirring once or twice, until lightly browned, 7 to 8 minutes. Meanwhile, use a vegetable peeler to shave about 2 ounces of the white chocolate into curls.

7. Pour the chilled pastry cream over the prebaked pie crust, smoothing the surface with a spatula. In an electric mixer fitted with whisk attachment, beat the heavy cream with the sugar and vanilla on medium speed. Gradually increase the speed to high, and whip to peaks that are firm enough to hold their shape. Spread the whipped cream over the surface of the pie. Just before serving, decorate the pie with the toasted coconut and white chocolate curls.