

THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



Banana Cream Pie (very slightly tweaked from Cook's Country)

I didn't want to buy a second container of half-and-half only use a small portion of it, so I used 2 cups half-and-half, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole milk, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cream. Then I only used $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cream for the topping, reducing the confectioners' sugar to $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons. I also scraped the seeds of a vanilla bean into the steeping dairy and let the bean steep as well. And I forgot the orange juice.

5 ripe bananas
4 tablespoons butter
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups half-and-half
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
6 large egg yolks
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons cornstarch
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla extract
pie crust for single-crust pie (recipe below)
2 tablespoons orange juice
1 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar

1. Peel 2 of the bananas and slice them into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick pieces. Melt 1 tablespoon of butter in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the sliced bananas and cook until they begin to soften, about 2 minutes. Add the half-and-half, bring to a boil, and boil for 30 seconds. Remove from the heat, cover, and allow to sit for 40 minutes.
2. Whisk the granulated sugar, egg yolks, and salt together in a large bowl until smooth. Whisk in the cornstarch. Strain the cooled half-and-half mixture through a fine mesh strainer into the yolk mixture – do not press on the bananas – and whisk until incorporated; discard the cooked bananas.
3. Transfer the mixture to a clean medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until it is thickened to the consistency of warm pudding (180 degrees), about 4 to 6 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat; whisk in the remaining 3 tablespoons of butter and 1 teaspoon of vanilla. Transfer the pastry cream to a bowl, press greased parchment paper directly against the surface, and allow it to cool for about one hour.
4. Meanwhile, roll the pie dough into a 12-inch round on a lightly floured counter. Transfer the dough to a 9-inch pie plate, fold the edge of the dough under itself so the edge of the fold is flush with the outer rim of the plate, and flute the edges. Refrigerate for 40 minutes, then freeze for 20 minutes. Adjust an oven rack to the lower-middle position and heat the oven to 375° .
5. Line the chilled pie shell with a 12-inch square of aluminum foil, folding the foil over the edges of the dough. Fill with pie weights, place the pie plate on a baking sheet, and bake for 20 minutes. Carefully remove the foil and the weights, rotate the plate, and continue baking until the crust is golden brown, about 7 to 11 minutes. Transfer it to a cooling rack to cool to room temperature.
6. Peel and slice the remaining 3 bananas to about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick and toss them with the orange juice. Whisk the pastry cream briefly, then spread half over the bottom of the pie shell. Arrange the sliced bananas on the pastry cream. Top with the remaining pastry cream.

7. Using a stand mixer fitted with a whisk, whip the cream, confectioner's sugar, and the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of vanilla on medium-low speed until foamy, about 1 minute. Increase the speed to high and whip until stiff peaks form, about 1 to 3 minutes. Spread the whipped cream evenly over the top of the pie. Refrigerate the pie until it is set, at least 5 hours and up to 24 hours.

Pie Crust for Single-Crust Pie (adapted from Smitten Kitchen)

Deb has instructions for mixing by hand if that's your preference.

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (6 ounces) flour
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon table salt
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, very cold
 $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ice water

Pulse the flour, sugar, and salt in a food processor until mixed. Add half of the butter; pulse once, add the remaining butter, and process with 1-second pulses until the largest pieces of butter are about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch across. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water; pulse once, then add 2 more tablespoons of water. Pulse a couple times to incorporate the water, then pinch a portion of the dough together; if it crumbles, pulse in another tablespoon of water. If it barely holds together, transfer the mixture to a large piece of plastic wrap. Form the dough into a ball, kneading it once or twice so it holds together. Wrap tightly and refrigerate for at least one hour before rolling.