

Coconut Custard Pie

Yields 1, 9-inch pie, 8 servings



“Over the years, I was often asked to include coconut custard pie in our Thanksgiving offerings at Tate’s Bake Shop. I finally created this recipe and it’s a great addition to my family’s table no matter the occasion. The secret is big flakes of coconut or coconut chips, as opposed to the regular sweetened flakes.”

Kathleen King

Ingredients

All-purpose flour for rolling the dough (Buttermilk and Lard Pie Dough recipes for a single-crust pie below)

1 1/2 cups **heavy cream**

1 cup **milk**

3 **large eggs** plus 1 **large yolk** (save the white), at room temperature

3/4 cup **sugar**

1 tablespoon **pure vanilla extract**

1/4 teaspoon freshly grated **nutmeg**

1/4 teaspoon **salt**

1 **large egg white**, beaten until foamy

1 cup **unsweetened coconut chips** (see Note)

Directions

Position an oven rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F.

On a lightly floured work surface, roll out the pie dough to fit a 9-inch pie plate. Transfer to the plate, flute the edges, and partially bake according to the directions below. Transfer to a wire cooling rack and let cool while you make the filling.

In a small saucepan, heat the cream and milk just to a simmer. Remove from the heat. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, yolk, sugar, vanilla, nutmeg, and salt. Gradually whisk in the hot cream mixture.

Lightly brush the pie shell with some of the beaten egg white. Sprinkle the coconut chips evenly in the pie shell. Pour in the egg mixture.

Bake for 15 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 300°F and bake until the top is beginning to brown and the custard is jiggly but not liquid when shaken, about 35 minutes. Let the pie cool completely on a wire cooling rack. Refrigerate until chilled, at least 2 hours.

Cut the pie into wedges and serve chilled. (The pie is best eaten the day of baking, but it is fine the next day, too.)

Note: Coconut chips - large unsweetened coconut flakes - are available at natural food stores and online at www.superiornutstore.com. Regular flaked sweet coconut is fine, but the results will be more along the lines of a traditional coconut pie.

Buttermilk Pie Dough

“This is my go-to pie crust. You can use buttermilk or milk soured with vinegar and it makes an easy-to-handle dough that bakes into a tender, flaky crust.”

Yield: 2, nine-inch single crusts or 1 nine-inch double crust

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups **unbleached all-purpose flour**

1 tablespoon **sugar**

3/4 teaspoon **salt**

8 tablespoons (1 stick) cold **salted butter**, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

1/2 cup cold **vegetable shortening**, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

6 tablespoons cold **buttermilk**, or as needed

Directions

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, and salt. Cut in the butter and shortening with a pastry blender or two knives until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs with a few pea-sized piece of fat. (You can also use your fingertips, but work quickly or the fats will soften, and you want them to stay cold.) Stir in just enough buttermilk until the dough clumps together; you don’t want it wet.

Press the dough together and divide it in half. Shape each half into a thick disk and wrap each one in clear plastic wrap. Refrigerate until chilled, about 1 hour. Pie dough is easier to roll out if it is chilled but not rock hard. (The dough can be frozen, wrapped in plastic wrap and stored in a zip-tight bag, for up to 1 month. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight.)

Lard Pie Dough

“This is my favorite pie dough for my home baking. Lard pie crust yields the flakiest, crispest crust you will ever make.”

Yield: 2, nine-inch single crusts or 1 nine-inch double crust

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups **unbleached all-purpose flour**

3/4 cup **unbleached cake flour** (see Note)

2 tablespoons **sugar**

1/2 teaspoon **salt**

1/8 teaspoon **baking powder**

12 tablespoons (1 1/2 sticks) cold **salted butter**, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

6 tablespoons **cold leaf lard**, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (supermarket lard works fine as well)

6 tablespoons cold **buttermilk**, or as needed

Directions

In a large bowl, combine the all-purpose flour, cake flour, sugar, salt, and baking powder. Cut in the butter and shortening with a pastry blender or two knives until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs with a few pea-sized piece of fat. (You can also use your fingertips, but work quickly or the fats will soften, and you want them to stay cold.) Stir in just enough buttermilk until the dough clumps together; you don’t want it wet.

Press the dough together and divide it in half. Shape each half into a thick disk and wrap each one in clear plastic wrap. Refrigerate until chilled, about 1 hour. Pie dough is easier to roll out if it is chilled but not rock hard. (The dough can be frozen, wrapped in plastic wrap and stored in a zip-tight bag, for up to 1 month. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight.)

Note: Unbleached cake flour can be purchased at many specialty food stores and online from www.kingarthurflour.com. If you use bleached cake flour, be sure it isn’t self-rising flour.

Prebaking Pie Crust

To line the pie plate: On a lightly floured work surface, roll out 1 pastry disk into a round, 4 inches larger than the bottom of the plate you are using (of 5 inches for a deep-dish pie plate). Fit the dough into the pie plate. Fold under the excess dough at the rim of the pie plate. Flute the dough as desired. Refrigerate the pie shell for 15 to 30 minutes. Prick the bottom of the crust with a fork to vent it. Lay a piece of aluminum foil over the entire surface of the dough and press so it conforms to the pie plate. Fill the foil-lined shell with small dried beans. (These can be used over and over again, until they smell “off”.) Position an oven rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F.

For a partially baked pie crust, bake until the edge of the exposed dough is set and barely beginning to brown, about 15 minutes. Remove the foil with the beans.

For a fully baked pie crust, prick the crust again after you remove the foil and beans to keep it from puffing. Continue baking until golden brown, about 10 minutes more.