

Lemon Meringue Pie

From America's Test Kitchen. Makes one 9-inch pie.

Ingredients

Graham Cracker-Coated Pie Shell:

- 1 [pastry crust]({{< relref "foolproof-pie-dough" >}})
- 1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs

Lemon Filling:

- 1 1/2 cups cold water
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 6 large egg yolks
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup juice from 2 or 3 lemons
- 1 tablespoon zest from the lemons
- 2 tablespoons butter (added last)

Meringue Topping:

- 1/3 cup water
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 4 large egg whites
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

1. Make pie crust and form into ball. Generously sprinkle pastry cloth with 2 tablespoons graham cracker crumbs. Place dough on pastry cloth and scatter a few more crumbs over dough. Roll dough, rotating a quarter turn after each stroke and sprinkling additional crumbs underneath and on top as necessary to coat heavily. Flip dough over, and continue to roll to form a 13-inch disk. Fit dough into 9" pie pan. Trim and flute. Prick and bake at 425° for 12 minutes.
2. Mix first four ingredients in a large, nonreactive saucepan. Bring mixture to simmer over medium heat, whisking frequently as mixture begins to thicken and turns translucent. Mix next four ingredients in a bowl. Add hot liquid to egg mixture a spoonful at a time. Pour egg mixture into hot liquid and cook over medium heat until thick. Add butter. Bring mixture to a good simmer, whisking constantly. Remove from heat, place plastic wrap directly on surface of filling to keep hot and prevent skin from forming.
3. For the meringue, mix cornstarch with 1/3 cup water in small saucepan; bring to simmer, whisking occasionally at beginning and more frequently as mixture thickens. When mixture starts to simmer and turns translucent, remove from heat. Let cool while beating egg whites.
4. Heat oven to 325 degrees. Mix cream of tartar and sugar together. Beat egg whites and vanilla until frothy. Beat in sugar mixture, 1 tablespoon at a time; until sugar is incorporated and mixture forms soft peaks. Add cooled cornstarch mixture, 1 tablespoon at a time; continue to beat meringue to stiff peaks (stiffens up quickly). Remove plastic from filling and return to very low heat during last minute or so of beating meringue to ensure filling is hot.

5. Pour filling into pie shell. Using a rubber spatula, immediately distribute meringue evenly around edge then center of pie to keep it from sinking into filling. Make sure meringue attaches to pie crust to prevent shrinking. Use back of spoon to create peaks all over meringue. Bake pie until meringue is golden brown, about 20-30 minutes. Transfer to wire rack and cool to room temperature. Serve.