

NO FEAR RECIPES (March 2010)

No-Fear Pie Crust

This pie dough can be pressed into a greased pie plate and placed in the fridge up to 2-days. It can also be wrapped in two layers of plastic wrap and stored in freezer up to 1 month. Once baked, the pie shell can be stored at room temperature for up to 1-day, if tightly wrapped with plastic wrap.

Makes a single layer 9-inch Pie Shell.

Ingredients

1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour

2 Tablespoons granulated sugar

1/4 teaspoon table salt

8 Tablespoons unsalted butter (1 stick - 1/4 lb), softened, but still cool

2 ounces (3-1/2 Tbs) cream cheese, softened but still cool

Instructions

1. Lightly spray cooking spray into a 9-inch Pyrex pie plate and set aside until needed. Pie plate must be coated with cooking spray or this crust will stick.
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar and salt. Set aside until needed.
3. Using an electric mixer set on medium-high, beat softened butter and softened cream cheese in another mixing bowl. Stop mixing once or twice and scrape down bowl and mixing blade with rubber spatula. Beat about 2-minutes until butter and cream cheese are completely mixed.
4. Set mixer on medium-low and add flour mixture to butter-cream cheese mixture. Beat until mixture looks like coarse cornmeal, about 20-seconds. Scrape sides of bowl with rubber spatula.
5. Set mixer on medium-high and beat dough about 30-seconds, until it forms large clumps.
6. Take 3-tablespoons of dough from mixing bowl and reserve for later use. This will be used to form the fluted rim of the pie crust.
7. Turn out the rest of the dough onto a lightly floured surface. Form dough into a ball and then flatten it into a circle about 6-inches across.
8. Place the pastry dough circle into the center of the greased 9-inch pie plate. Using your fingers (or the bottom of a drinking glass), press the dough into an even layer on the bottom of the pie plate. You can hold the pie plate up to the light to see if the dough is in an even layer.
9. Use your fingertips to press the dough up the sides of the pie plate. Make sure the dough is an even thickness throughout the pie plate.

10. Take the reserved 3-tablespoons of dough and roll into a 12-inch rope of dough on a floured surface. Cut the 12-inch dough rope into 3 even pieces. Roll each of the pieces into an 8-inch dough rope. Lay the three 8-inch dough ropes, end to end, around the top rim of the pie plate. Make sure all pieces of dough on the rim and bottom of pie plate are pressed together into a single layer. Form a fluted dough edge on the rim of the pie plate.

11. Cover pie plate with plastic wrap and chill in the fridge for at least 1-hour before baking.

12. Preheat the oven to 325-degrees F. Use a fork to lightly poke the bottom of the pie crust. Bake empty pie crust (without using weights) on a middle oven rack until golden brown. Baking time 35 to 40 minutes.

If large bubbles form during cooking, wait until the pie crust is done and cooled. Then press down the bubbles with a kitchen towel.

Load with your favorite filling—no fear calories, as well.

No Fear Sugar Cookies

6 cups flour
3 tsp. baking powder
2 cups unsalted butter
2 cups sugar (white granulated)
2 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla extract or desired flavoring (I like almond myself)
1 tsp. salt

Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs and vanilla. Mix well. Mix dry ingredients and add a little at a time to butter mixture. Mix until flour is completely incorporated and the dough comes together.

Chill for 1 to 2 hours. Roll to desired thickness and cut into desired shapes. Bake on ungreased baking sheet at 350 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes or until just beginning to turn brown around the edges. This recipe can make up to 5-dozen 3" cookies.

- 4 eggs
- 1 C. butter or margarine, softened
- 1 C. shortening
- 1-1/2 C. brown sugar
- 1-1/2 C. sugar
- 5-1/2 C. all purpose flour
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. salt

- 2 C. semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 to 1/2 C walnuts or pecans chopped, optional

In a very large mixing bowl, combine butter and shortening. Add the sugars. Cream until thoroughly blended. Add eggs and vanilla and beat well. In separate bowl, sift flour, salt and baking soda. Add sifted mixture by fourths, stirring after each addition. Add the chocolate chips and nuts, if desired, and mix by hand. Drop by rounded teaspoons onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake for approx. 14 - 15 minutes at 350 degees F. Makes about 100 cookies. These cookies freeze well.

Easy No-Fear Fudge

3 bags of semi-sweet chocolate chips (12 ounce)

2 cans of sweetened condensed milk (14 ounce)

3 cups chopped walnuts

4 teaspoons vanilla

Mix milk and chocolate in a large microwavable glass bowl. Microwave on high about 2-3 minutes until chocolate is almost melted, stirring once halfway through. Continue to stir until completely melted. Add vanilla and walnuts. Spread into a large 9x13 brownie pan sprayed lightly with cooking oil. Refrigerate several hours until firm. When firm, remove entire block from pan. Let set at room temp. for a few minutes before cutting. Using a sharp knife on a cutting board, cut into bite-sized squares about a half inch to an inch across). Fudge can be stored at room temp in air tight containers or you can keep it in the fridge.

Two other "no-fear" recipes to try at home:

Fear-Not Salmon

Turn oven to 450.

For rub: Combine 1/4 c. brown sugar, 2 Tb. fresh or dried thyme, 2 Tb. smoked paprika, and 2 ts. salt. Rub 1 Or 2 ts. olive oil onto a 1.5 lb. salmon fillet. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper (or just oil one). Use about half your spice rub on the fillet, pressing down to make sure it sticks. Roast in the oven for about 10 minutes, checking at 8 minutes. (If you don't have smoked paprika, use regular but reduce to 1Tbsp.)

No Fear Phyllo Torte

1 pound Greek feta cheese, crumbled

3 cups cottage cheese

3 large eggs

1/3 cup chopped fresh dill

1/4 cup grated Romano cheese

1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 1-pound box phyllo dough, thawed overnight in refrigerator if necessary

1 1/2 cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, melted

Greek honey, for serving (optional).

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees. In a food processor, combine feta, cottage cheese, eggs, dill, 2 tablespoons Romano, the nutmeg and pepper and pulse just to combine (you can also use a large bowl and a fork). Mixture should be well combined, but still chunky, not smooth.

2. Sprinkle remaining 2 tablespoons Romano into a Bundt pan. Drape a sheet of phyllo on top of Bundt pan, poke a hole into phyllo where center tube is and push phyllo into pan to line it. Do this with another phyllo sheet, but place it perpendicular to first sheet. Continue adding phyllo sheets in this crisscross manner until all sheets are used. Edges of phyllo should hang over edges of pan.

3. Scrape cheese filling into pan, and fold edges of phyllo over filling. Using a sharp knife, poke many holes (at least 20) in dough that reach all the way to bottom of pan. Slowly pour melted butter over torte; some butter will seep through holes and some will remain on top of dough.

4. Place Bundt pan on a baking sheet and bake for about 1 hour 15 minutes, or until torte is puffy and golden brown. Allow torte to cool in pan for 1 to 2 hours before inverting onto a plate and slicing. Serve warm or at room temperature, with honey if desired.

Yield: 10 to 12 servings.