



PECANS

RECIPES & HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN NUT

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RECIPES BY REBECCA LANG

WITH 60 RECIPES FROM SALADS & SAUCES TO SNACKS & SMOOTHIES

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CLASSIC PECAN PIE

SERVES 6 TO 8

Pecan pies have been dressed up in countless ways—with bourbon and dark chocolate to name just two—but the classic never goes out of style. Even so, there's still room for differences. Wherever there is an oven in the South, you'll find a debate about the proper way to add pecans to pies: halves or chopped. The solution? Make it both ways and decide which one you like best.

CRUST

1¹/₃ cups (215 g) all-purpose flour, plus more for the work surface

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup (125 g) vegetable shortening

4 to 6 tablespoons (60 to 90 ml) ice water

FILLING

1¹/₃ cups (153 g) pecans (chopped or halves)

1 cup (220 g) firmly packed light brown sugar

1 cup (315 ml) light corn syrup

4 large eggs, lightly beaten

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1¹/₂ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1/4 teaspoon salt

Softly whipped cream, for serving (optional)

To make the crust, in a bowl, stir together the flour and salt. Using a pastry blender or two knives, cut the shortening into the flour mixture until the mixture forms coarse crumbs the size of small peas. Sprinkle 4 tablespoons (60 ml) of the ice

water over the flour-shortening mixture and stir and toss with a fork just until evenly moistened. If the dough seems too crumbly, add a little more ice water. Gather the dough together and shape into a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 45 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C).

Lightly flour a work surface and transfer the dough to it. Roll out the dough into a round 11 to 12 inches (28 to 30 cm) in diameter and 1/8 inch (3 mm) thick. Carefully roll the dough around the rolling pin and position the pin over a 9-inch (23-cm) pie dish. Unroll the dough, centering it in the dish, and gently press it onto the bottom and up the sides. Trim off the excess dough, leaving a 3/4-inch (2 cm) overhang. Fold the overhang under and crimp the edges.

Line the crust with a piece of aluminum foil or parchment paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake the crust for 3 minutes. Remove the weights and foil, return the crust to the oven, and bake for 3 minutes longer. Transfer to a wire rack and let cool. Reduce the oven temperature to 325°F (165°C).

To make the filling, combine all of the ingredients in a bowl and stir to mix well. Pour into the cooled pie crust.

Bake for about 55 minutes, until the filling is set and pecans are deeply browned and the crust is golden. Tent the pie with foil if the crust begins to get too dark before the pie is ready. Let cool completely (about 1 hour) on a rack before serving. Serve with softly whipped cream, if desired.