

Holidays

Chocolate Cream Pie

Most people might prefer a birthday or holiday cake, but I was raised in a family that would just as soon celebrate special occasions with a pie. I often stop at Bakers Square restaurant to buy a French Silk chocolate pie to take to family gatherings at my folks' place. But I also enjoy making my own pies, using recipes I've collected over the years.

My mom makes the best pie crust I've had — using a recipe handed down from her mother. Here's her pie crust recipe, along with a recipe for chocolate pie filling from the Star Restaurant in Humboldt, Iowa, that I came across more than 20 years ago. (The restaurant is no longer in business, having burned down in 1976.) It's still the best chocolate pie filling recipe I've discovered. The cornstarch can make the filling lumpy. If that happens, run the cooked filling through a blender before pouring it into the baked pie shell.

Pie Crust

■ INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/4 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1/8 cup water (Don't use more than that, or the crust won't be light and flaky.)

■ DIRECTIONS:

Mix flour and salt. Cut in shortening. Add

water. Form the pie crust in the pie tin. Pierce the pie crust bottom and sides several times with a fork to create holes, then bake at 350 degrees F until done.

Chocolate filling

■ INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 egg yolks, beaten
- Salt
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 1/2 squares baking chocolate
- 1/2 pint whipping cream, whipped
- 1 Hershey chocolate bar

■ DIRECTIONS:

Combine milk and sugar in saucepan. Heat until just barely warm. Add beaten egg yolks and a dash of salt, stirring quickly so the eggs won't scramble. Bring mixture to a boil. Add cornstarch. Stir until smooth. Take off heat and add vanilla, butter and baking chocolate. When chocolate is melted, beat mixture until all is smooth. Pour into pie shell. Let cool. Cover with whipped cream. Top with chocolate curls made by stripping candy bar with a potato peeler. Makes one chocolate pie.



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