

Hot Ginger Caramel Apple Pear Pie



Basic Pie Pastry

I am the third generation to use this pastry recipe. It has served us well for nearly 100 years—much easier in a food processor, however, a convenience my grandmother would have embraced. The secret here is lard, the only way to a perfect flaky texture. At Farmer's Markets it is now possible to obtain pure clean organic lard, even occasionally leaf lard, which is the finest quality - once available only to professional pastry chefs. Look for it!

In a food processor, combine:

3 cups flour

with:

1 tsp. salt

1 cup lard (1/2 lb.), frozen and cut in small shards

pulse to combine, then add:

1/3 to 1/2 cup ice water

pulse again until the dough comes together in a ball. Scrape out of the processor bowl onto a lightly floured surface and shape into a thick cylinder. Slice into 3 equal discs, separate with plastic wrap, seal in an air-tight bag and refrigerate, or freeze (up to one year). NOTE: Third pastry wheel is for reserve use (i.e. mistakes, a second pie where only a bottom crust is needed, and so forth).

Hot Ginger Caramel Apple Pear Pie Filling

Don't use the dreadful Granny Smith apples that are supposed to be "baking apples;" they may be tart but they're dry, don't soften much when baked and don't yield a juicy pie. Ideal are the greenest Macintosh apples in the bin—even they are getting hard to find, so any other but Delicious, the greenest of any kind, will do.

Peel, core and thinly slice:

3 cups apples (about 2 large ones)

Cut in half, remove stem, core with a spoon, then thinly slice:

3 cups Bartlett pears (about 3 pears); the skins are thinner so don't need to be removed.

Place these in a bowl and mix together with:

½ tsp. cinnamon

1/3 cup Robert Lambert Pear Ginger Jam

set aside

Roll out 1 disc of pastry on a well-floured board. Lay into a 9" pie pan and smear the bottom with:

1 tbsp. softened butter

top with:

1/3 cup sugar

and add the fruit. Roll out a second pastry disc, cut vent holes and place over fruit. Fold the excess bottom crust's edges over the edges of the top crust and flute to seal. Bake on the bottom shelf in the oven at 425* for 40 minutes. Shield the edge crust by covering with strips of tin foil to prevent over-browning—remove for the last 10 minutes of baking.