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Holiday Recipe updates from Mel's Kitchen.

Over the last several months many of you have been asking how I make the pie within a cake. It really is not that hard. I served my chocolate cake on some of the tours and everyone wanted the recipe. The recipes for the pie within the cake, my chocolate cake recipe, my apple pie recipe, my raspberry pie recipe and even my piecrust recipe are below. It is the same recipes just combined together.

Pie with in a cake Raspplle cake

You can use what ever flavors you like but this is how it is done. You need two 3 inch x 9 inch spring form pans. 2 boxes of your favorite cake mix and two of your favorite fruit pies. (I bake my own but you don't have to.) You can make your own variation but here is how I make the pie. Make up a lemon cake mix and a chocolate cake mix according to the box directions. Hint – When adding eggs to a boxed cake, separate the eggs. Whip the egg whites until they form soft peaks and fold into the batter. This will make your cake much lighter in texture, then by following the directions and adding whole eggs. This extra step makes a heavy cake lighter. Spray the inside of the spring form pans with Pam and dust with flower so the cake does not stick. Place a third of the chocolate cake batter and put in the bottom of the first spring form pan. Take an 8 inch cooked raspberry pie, trim off the excess crust (where the pie has been crimped) and place it on top of the spring form pie with the chocolate batter. If you are using a store bought pie remove the top crust, if making your own pie leave off the top crust or use a lattice crust so the cake batter can mingle with the pie filling. Fill the rest of the spring form pan with the remaining chocolate batter. Make sure the pie is completely covered. Take a ¼ cup of raspberry flavored liquor and poor over the chocolate batter. Take a butter knife and swirl the liquor through the batter. (you can leave out the booze if you want to) In the other pan do the same thing with the lemon cake and apple pie. You will need to bake this cake at a low temperature to allow the cake batter to cook. I bake at 325 for about an hour to an hour and a quarter or until I can insert a toothpick in the cake and it comes out clean. You need to let the cake cool for at least an hour. I put a layer of chocolate mouse between the cakes and then frost with your favorite frosting. This cake is truly decadent but has such a wonderful taste. Before you ask yes you can do this cake with a single pie and have half the pleasure and half the calories. The cake is six inches tall when finished so the slices have to be small.

Chocolate mouse filling can be made the day before and the pies can be made the day before.

Ingredients

8 (1 ounce) squares semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
1/2 cup water, divided
2 tablespoons unsalted butter (no substitutes)
3 egg yolks
2 tablespoons sugar
1 1/4 cups whipping cream, whipped

Directions

In a microwave or double boiler, heat chocolate, 1/4-cup water and butter until the chocolate and butter are melted. Cool for 10 minutes. In a small heavy saucepan, whisk egg yolks, sugar and remaining water. Cook and stir over low heat until mixture reaches 160 degrees F, about 1-2 minutes. Remove from the heat; whisk in chocolate mixture. Set saucepan in ice and stir until cooled, about 5-10 minutes. Fold in whipped cream and chill until the mouse sets at least two hours.

Raspberry Pie

Ingredients

1 quart fresh raspberries
1 1/4 cups light brown sugar
8 teaspoons cornstarch
2 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca
6 tablespoons water
4 tablespoons butter
1 8 inch pie crust or store bought pie shell (my recipe below)

Directions

Mix together raspberries, sugar, cornstarch, minute tapioca and water. Mix and let sit while you make your piecrust. Put berries in bottom crust, and put 4 - 1 tablespoon pats of butter on top. Make a lattice crust so the cake batter mingles with the pie. Do not over fill your pie shell. Hint – I just invert the pie into the spring form pan loaded with batter and then remove the pie plate. Bake at 425 degrees F for 15 minutes. . Reduce heat to 350 degrees F and bake 40-45 minutes more or until crust is golden and filling is bubbly

Apple Pie

Pastry for crust (recipe below)

5 cups sliced, peeled gala apples - about 2 lbs.
2 Tablespoons lemon juice
1 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
2 Tablespoons butter
1 egg yolk
1 Tablespoon milk

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, toss the sliced apples with lemon juice.
2. Combine sugars, flour, cinnamon and nutmeg; add to apples and toss well to coat.
3. Fill pastry lined 8-inch pie pan with apple mixture. Dot with butter.
4. Place a lattice on top of pie filling
5. In a small bowl, beat the egg yolk and milk. Brush mixture over top crust.
6. Bake at 425 degrees F for 15 minutes.
7. Reduce heat to 350 degrees F and bake 40-45 minutes more or until crust is golden and filling is bubbly.

Flaky Pastry Pie Crust Recipe

Makes two 8-inch piecrusts and strips for lattice crusts.

Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt

1 cup butter, chilled and diced

1/2 cup ice water

Directions:

Combine the flour and salt in a large bowl. . Cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the ice water, a Tablespoon at a time, until the crust mixture forms a ball.. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight. Sprinkle flour onto rolling surface. Roll dough out, then divide in half. Roll each half to fit a 8-inch pie plate. Place crust in pie plate, pressing evenly into the bottom and sides.

Chocolate Cake

Ingredients:

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for pans

2 cups sugar (or sugar substitute)

3/4 cups good cocoa powder

2 teaspoons baking soda

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon salt

1 cup buttermilk, shaken

1/2 cup vegetable oil

2 extra-large eggs, at room temperature separated

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 cup freshly brewed hot coffee

Directions:

Sift the flour, sugar cocoa, baking soda, baking powder, and salt into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment and mix on low speed until combined. In another bowl, combine the buttermilk, oil, egg yolks, and vanilla. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add the wet ingredients to the dry. With mixer still on low, add the coffee and stir just to combine, scraping the bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula. Beat the egg whites to a soft peak and fold into cake mixture.

Mel's Lemon Cake

Ingredients

1/2 pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature

2 cups granulated sugar (or sugar substitute)

4 extra-large eggs, at room temperature seperated

1/3 cup grated lemon zest (6 to 8 large lemons)

3 cups flour

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice, divided

3/4 cup buttermilk, at room temperature

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Directions

Cream the butter and 2 cups sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. With the mixer on medium speed, add the egg yolks, 1 at a time, and the lemon zest. Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a bowl. In another bowl, combine 1/4 cup lemon juice, the buttermilk, and vanilla. Add the flour and buttermilk mixtures alternately to the batter, beginning and ending with the flour. Whip the egg whites until soft peaks form and fold into batter.