



Goodies

Belarusian Apple Pie

By Chris Duke

Anna's Gourmet Goodies



This is another recipe from my friend Liudmila in Belarus. I have done my best to translate the ingredients and amounts, and after serving it to our guests for the 'Culinary Tour of Belarus' Fundraising dinners – it gets a thumbs up.

It is sort of a cross between a pie and a pastry. The apples do not have any sugar or spice on them, so it is not too sweet, but just right with the sugar from the crust. We served it warm with a scoop of real vanilla ice cream – I expect Mothers everywhere will approve.

Belarusian Apple Pie

Makes (2) pies

1 lb. cottage cheese
5 cups all purpose flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
2 sticks of butter
1 ¼ cups sugar
4 eggs
1 tsp vinegar
3 lbs. Granny Smith apple slices

Top coating

1 egg
2 tbsp sugar

Process the cottage cheese in a blender or food processor until smooth. Sift together the flour, salt and soda, and place in a large bowl. Cut the cold butter into small chunks. Using a pastry blender or two butter knives, cut the butter into the flour mixture until well blended. Crack the eggs into a bowl and add the vinegar. Whisk lightly until blended.

Add the cottage cheese and eggs to the flour mixture. Mix with a fork until a dough forms. Sprinkle with additional flour to prevent sticking, then knead until well blended and smooth (about 3 minutes). Divide the dough in half, form into a ball, wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least an hour. You can freeze this dough and thaw it for use later. Just make sure it is sealed in a freezer bag. To thaw, leave it in the refrigerator overnight. I had the best results when the dough was thoroughly chilled.

Peel and core the apples, slice, and then cut into small chunks – roughly ½” or so. Divide the dough ball in half. On a floured surface roll out a circle approximately 12” in diameter. To bake, I use a 9.5”, non-stick cheesecake pan. If you don’t have something this size, I’d recommend substituting another round pan with 2” edges, or you could use a large pie dish (10”+). If you are not using a non-stick pan, coat the bottom and sides thoroughly with butter, then dust with flour to prevent sticking.

Carefully roll the dough around your rolling pin, and then unroll it over the top of your baking pan. Lift the edges of the dough and let it slide down the sides to the bottom. Try not to stretch the sides of the dough when fitting to the bottom. Add 1 ½ pounds of the apples inside the pan, spreading evenly to hold up the sides of the dough. Fold any excess dough around the edge over the apples and towards the center. Brush the top edges of the dough with water.

Roll the other half of the dough ball out to a circle approximately 12” in diameter. Carefully roll the dough around your rolling pin, and then unroll over the top of your baking pan. Using a plastic scraper, or your fingers, cut off the excess dough around the top of the sides of the pan. Gently press the top layer of dough down onto the top of the moistened dough to seal.

For the top coating, whisk one egg together with 1 tsp of water. Using a pastry brush, coat the top of the cake. Sprinkle the 2 tbsp of sugar evenly over the top. Use a sharp knife to cut 8 or so 1” slits in the top to release the steam.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Bake for approximately 30 minutes. I use a thermometer to check the internal temperature – it should be 190-200 degrees.

Remove from the oven and run a knife around the edge (if not using a non-stick pan) to free up the sides. Allow to cool for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Slice and serve slightly warm with some real vanilla ice cream. Comfort food? You bet!

Bon Appetit!