



Fresh Peach and Blueberry Pie with Grand Marnier

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Anna's Gourmet Goodies



There are two primary categories of peaches, freestone and clingstone. Most peaches found in the markets are freestone varieties and they are characterized by flesh that separates easily from the pit. You'll find a number of varieties and opinions on which one is best. Taste is always the best indicator, so sample them all, and pick the one that you like best.

This week's recipe calls for making a piecrust from scratch, and if you are partial to the frozen variety, I hope that you will give this a try. It takes a little longer, but a real homemade pie is a treat for those you love. So if you've avoided making crusts in the past because you think you can't do it or don't have the time, dig up grandma's pie dish, slow down a bit and give it a try.

Peach and Blueberry Pie with Grand Marnier

Pie crust (makes 2 crusts for a 9" deep dish pie plate):

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 stick + 2 tbsp cold butter
- 1/3 cup cold water

Filling:

- 3 cups fresh sliced peaches
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 shot Grand Marnier
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup all purpose flour
- ¼ tsp salt

Topping:

- ½ cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- ½ stick butter

Crust

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Sift together flour and salt in a bowl. Slice the butter into small pieces and use a pastry blender cut the butter into the flour until the chunks disappear and it resembles a coarse meal. If you don't have a pastry blender, use a fork or a couple of butter knives. Add the water slowly and stir with a fork until dough forms. Knead just until smooth, divide in half, and form two dough balls. Wrap in clear plastic and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Remove the dough from the refrigerator and let sit for 15 minutes or so. Knead a couple of times and lay on a floured surface. Sprinkle the top with flour and roll the dough into a circle approximately 11" in diameter. Gently flour the top of the dough again, lay the roller along the edge, and roll the dough up on the roller. Lay the roller on the top edge of the pie dish, and un-roll dough into the pan. Lift the edges of the dough gently and let it fall down into the sides of the pan. Never stretch dough by pressing it down to make it fit or it will shrink when baked.

Fold over the excess dough towards the middle around the top edge and use your fingers to pinch together. Go ahead and be creative here – use a knife or plastic utensil to create a regular pattern around the pie. Place in oven and bake for 7 minutes. Remove and cool.

Some people prick the bottom with a fork before baking to let steam escape, or use a pie chain or beads to keep the crust from rising up from the bottom. I simply keep an eye on it, pull it out if it begins to rise, and gently press it back down into the pan to push the air out.

Filling

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Wash the peaches and peel. You can blanch them in boiling water for 30-60 seconds then plunge them into ice water to make them easier to peel – I prefer to use a sharp knife instead. When peeled, slice by pressing the knife against the pit running from the top to the bottom. Repeat this every 1/8" or so and when you are finished, simply pull the slices away from the pit.

Wash and drain the blueberries. Mix the peaches, blueberries, cream and Grand Marnier in a bowl. Combine the sugar, flour, and salt. Add to the peach mixture and stir to coat evenly. Pour the mixture into the pie shell leaving about 1/4 inch from the top edge. Don't over fill – this pie will bubble over a bit when done.

Place on a cookie sheet and bake at 425 degrees for 15 minutes. Turn the oven down to 375 degrees, bake for another 30 minutes and then add the topping.

Topping

Mix the graham cracker crumbs and brown sugar in a bowl. Using the pastry blender, cut the butter into the mixture. Work until the butter disappears and the topping is crumbly, resembling small peas.

Remove the sheet and carefully spread the topping evenly over the pie. Return to the oven and bake for an additional 30 minutes. Remove and let cool for about 3 hours.

Serve this pie warm to room temperature. You could add some real vanilla ice cream, or for an extra special treat, whip up some fresh cream with a little Grand Marnier. Or you could simply enjoy it plain and simple.

Bon Appetit!