

# **Apple Pies 16<sup>th</sup> Century England**

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# 1 Recipe

## 1.1 Allergy alert

**This pastry contains wheat and dairy.** This pastry was created in the absence of any other food products other than those listed in the ingredients section of the recipe.

## 1.2 Short crust

Yield: 2 crusts

- 1 cup pastry flour
- 1 cup bread flour
- 1 teaspoon table salt
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 pinch saffron
- 2/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons shortening
- 4-6 tbl water

All ingredients should be ice cold prior to use.

1. Combine dry ingredients with shortening.
2. Mix until fat becomes the size of a small pea.
3. Add water 1 oz at a time until dough comes together. Do not over mix.
4. Divide dough into 2
5. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and shape into a disk
6. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours.
7. Roll out into 12 inch circle

Your dough can now be used as pie bottom and top. Fill with sweet or savory seasonings.

## 1.3 Apple filling

Preheat oven to 425.

- 12 green apples
- ½ cup of sugar
- 3 tbl flour
- ½ tsp ground pepper
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp cloves
- ½ tsp cardamom
- ½ tsp mace
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 tsp Lemon juice

Directions

1. Peel, core and cut apples into 1/2 inch slices
2. Mix 1/4 cup of sugar with apples. Allow to drain for 1 hour.
3. Combine sugar, baking mix, spices, lemon juice and drained apples
4. Layer slices into pie shell
5. Top pie with second crust and crimp edges
6. Cut slits for ventilation in top crust
7. Bake at 425 40 minutes on the lowest rack in your oven. Use a sheet of aluminum foil to catch any juices.

## 2 Medieval recipes

### 2.1 Crust

1553 - From the English translation by Valoise Armstrong of the 1553 German cookbook Kochbunch der Sabina Welsesine:

61 - To make a pastry dough for all shaped pies - Take flour, the best that you can get, about two handfuls, depending on how large or small you would have the pie. Put it on the table and with a knife stir in two eggs and a little salt. Put water in a small pan and a piece of fat the size of two good eggs, let it all dissolve together and boil. Afterwards pour it on the flour on the table and make a strong dough and work it well, however you feel is right. If it is summer, one must take meat broth instead of water and in the place of the fat the skimmings from the broth. When the dough is kneaded, then make of it a round ball and draw it out well on the sides with the fingers or with a rolling pin, so that in the middle a raised area remains, then let it chill in the cold. Afterwards shape the dough as I have pointed out to you. Also reserve dough for the cover and roll it out into a cover and take water and spread it over the top of the cover and the top of the formed pastry shell and join it together well with the fingers. Leave a small hole. And see that it is pressed together well, so that it does not come open. Blow in the small hole which you have left, then the cover will lift itself up. Then quickly press the hole closed. Afterwards put it in the oven. Sprinkle flour in the dish beforehand. Take care that the oven is properly heated, then it will be a pretty pastry. The dough for all shaped pastries is made in this manner.

### 2.2 Pie

From The Forme of Cury: XXVII For to make Tartys in Applis.

Tak gode Applys and gode Spycis and Figys and reysons and Perys and wan they are wel ybrayed colourd with Safron wel and do yt in a cofyn and yt forth to bake wel.

## 3 Period ingredients

### 3.1 Spices

I have stayed true to period spices. Modern pies are often spiced with cinnamon, sugar, maybe allspice and nutmeg. Period kitchens had access to a wide range of spices and often included pepper, cardamom, saffron and mace in desert dishes. These are the spices I used in the pastry. It creates a sweet desert that has distinct bite.

## 4 Deviations from period recipe

### 4.1 Short crust

The crust recipe can be used for either sweet or savory fillings, depending on what is used to moisten the dough. Either crust is made with lard or animal fat. I have substituted the animal fat with vegetable shortening. This was done to accommodate several different food need groups. Dietary restrictions for vegetarians and some religious groups prohibit the consumption of rendered animal fats. Vegetable shortening is a comparable modern fat equivalent in moisture and consistency for lard and can be used in a 1:1 ratio in most baking recipes. Butter can also be used, but the shortening provides texture and flavor similar to those that would have been produced with lard.

Another modern dough application is the cutting in of the fat rather than melting it and combining it into the flour. This combined with the addition of sugar, changes the structure of the short crust. Using this dough method provides a more stable crust, which addresses some important preservation concerns. The pies traveled from PA via train to the site.

## 4.2 Filling

The most significant addition is the use of a binder in the filling. This binder helps reduce the amount of liquid generated by the apples. This provides stability and increases preservation. Sugar is an important preservative. While it was used heavily in the later part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century as a sweetener, refined sugar was not the preferred sugar for preservation.

## 4.3 Flour

*"Take flour, the best that you can get"* can mean a couple of different things. It could be referring to the type or the quality of the flour. Normally pastry flour would be a logical choice. It is made from a low gluten flour from a soft winter flour. It satisfies the requirement for being a fine flour on both type and grade. However for transportation purposes, a higher gluten flour was used. All purpose flour can be made with a 1:1 ratio of cake flour to bread flour.