smitten kitchen Before I abandoned you (online) to spend time with you (in person) the better part of the last two months, leading to premature but rightly deserved obituaries\*, I spend about half of the fall I was in town for obsessed with Dutch apple pie, and a significant amount of that time trying to understand what it was and was not. There seems to be a divide wherein American home cooking sites largely refer to a Dutch apple pie as a deep-dish apple pie (sometimes, but not always, in a cake pan) with a crumb topping and Dutch (or Dutch-sounding; I do not speak the language\*\* so am making an educated guess) cooks use a more cookie-like dough that’s cross-crossed on top with a shiny finish. Fortunately, around this time I remembered that one of my son’s good friend’s mom is Dutch and she was happy to set me on the right course: yes the lattice is shiny, the dough is sweet and more buttery tasting than its American counterpart, the end result looks more like a cake, and please remember to send all samples over. From there, I was off to the races… sort of. First I had to watch a lot of videos of home cooks making it and, as no two recipes precisely agreed, basically just throw my hands in the air and hope I could work it out in the kitchen. It does not always happen — figuring things out on an early go — but this time it did. I hope this is a good omen for the year to come, as my cooking wish list for 2018 could fill five calendars, and for you too: this is much, much easier than it looks. I realize that Dutch apple pie may not be everyone’s or even most people’s Christmas tradition but will you look at this glorious thing? I think it deserves a chance. It’s fragrant and buttery and rustic but fancy and the only proper way to eat it, or so many things worth eating, is mit schlag (with whipped cream), really an inordinate amount too, so save those dainty dollops for a different party. I also want to warn you about one more thing: I don’t think you have to look too deep in this site’s archives to find evidence of my devotion to American-style pie but do know that I had a single bite of this warm pie with a pillow of barely sweetened cream and wondered how or why I’d ever want to eat American apple pie again.