

# Dutch Apple Pie

Traditional Dutch Apple Pie has a lattice cover, is baked in a spring form and is spiced up with cinnamon and raisins. There's no magic in the recipe although the pies tend to come out better when you have a little bit of experience in making them. In this recipe I'm trying to incorporate as much "expert knowledge" as I can to shorten the learning period.

Apples: tart, firm apples are preferred. Granny Smith is ok, Gold Renet (Belle de Boskoop) or Jona Gold is better.



## Ingredients

**Ingredients for an 8" pie.** For a 10" pie, add 50% extra.

### Material:

8" spring form or 10" spring form (add 50% to all measurements for 10" form)

2 mixing bowls (one will work, two is easier)

Grater

Rolling pin

Apple slicer

### Dough:

2¼ cups of self-rising flour

2 sticks (1 cup) of salted butter. You can use unsalted butter but then you need to add salt to the dough. Salted butter is easier.

½ cup brown sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla essence

1 lemon

Breadcrumbs

### Filling:

5 lbs of apples (or less if they're big apples)

1 cup of raisins

¼ cup of granulated sugar

1½ tablespoon of cinnamon

Lemon juice

### Lattice:

1 egg

½ cup of flour



# 1. Mixing the dough

First, put the raisins in a cup and fill it with hot water for the raisins to soak.

Then, mix the flour, brown sugar and butter (all butter **except** one tablespoon) in a large mixing bowl, cut the butter in small cubes with two butter knives and then start kneading. Add lemon zest (rub the lemon skin over the grater) and the vanilla essence. Keep kneading until the dough turns into a flexible plastic ball. It may seem a bit crumbly at first but once you have the butter and flour mixed really well together it should be a bit sticky. You can add a bit of milk or use more butter to make the dough more supple but it's not really needed. **Do not add an egg to make the dough supple. You will regret it. Repeat: do *not* add an egg.** Actually do add it the first time. Then you'll know why not to do that...

Once the dough ball is ready, leave it in the bowl and cover it with a towel. If you use one bowl, leave the ball in the spring form (still covered) and let it sit there for a while.

# 2. Creating the filling

Peel all the apples. If you have small (2"–2½" size) your core losses will be pretty high and you will need 2½ lbs. of apples. If your apples are large (3½" or larger) core loss will be lower and you can use only 2 lbs. of apples.

Peel all the apples, and rub them lightly with lemon juice to prevent them from browning. Then remove the cores and cut them in 16 slices. I like to use an apple slicer for it, as I can slice and core in a single move. Using the slicer is easier if you cut off a ¼" slice from the bottom of the apple. The slicer creates 8 slices, I then cut each slice in half. Don't slice the last one or two apples, but dice them instead; that way you have some filler material. After peeling I do one apple at a time and dump the slices in the bowl; then I sprinkle more lemon juice over the apple slices to prevent browning. The lemon juice adds a nice accent to the taste so don't worry about that.

Once all the apples are sliced, drain the cup of raisins and add them to the bowl. Just dump them at the top, no need to mix as there's more work to do; if you mix too much all your raisins will sink to the bottom.

Now add the cinnamon and the granulated sugar. Mix loosely and fast as things get sticky! Finally, add the flour to the mix. The sugar will jellyfy the apples a little bit which is good, but don't overdo it; letting the filling sit while you're preparing the form is just about the right amount of time.

Don't taste the filling; it's highly addictive and you will not be able to stop after the first scoop, and eating the entire bowl will make you sick. It makes a good apple salad!

# 3. Filling the form

Take the remaining teaspoon of butter and rub it over the bottom and side walls of the spring form. **Neglect this step at your own peril, even with a Teflon coated spring form.**

Now take your dough ball and divide it in three equal pieces. One piece will go to the bottom, one piece to the side wall and the remaining piece will make up the lattice. Roll one of the pieces to a ball and roll it out to a circle that is a bit smaller than the form. Put it in the form and start spreading it out to the sides. Don't worry if it seems too thin; you *want* it to be as thin as possible. If it is spread out so thin that holes appear, add a little bit, but not too much. Pay special attention to the edges: thin, thin, thin. It's easy and seductive to make the edges a bit thicker; don't do that.

Now roll the second piece of dough into small patches and apply them to the wall. Thin, again, is the name of the game. Press them well into the bottom (just make sure you don't get it thick corner) and up to the top of the spring form. The higher you get the better; if you can't make it all the way to the top then your walls are too thick and you will have to make them thinner.

Finally, cover the bottom with a thick layer of breadcrumbs. Roll the form around and on its side to cover the sides as well, then pour out the remainder. The breadcrumbs will form a barrier against any juices leaking out of the filling.

Finally, dump in the filling in three or four batches, making sure to lay out the slices as flat (horizontal) as possible. The tighter you can pack the filling into the form the better the pie will

# 4. Creating the lattice

Preheat the oven at 400°F. The lattice is *a lot* of work, but worth it. It's the icing on your cake. Well it's really the lattice on your pie but you get the idea. Theoretically you can create the lattice straight from the remaining dough but that never works for me. So this is what I do instead:

Add half a cup of dough, and split the yolk from the egg (keep the egg white apart. That's what you *really* need) and add that too. If things are too sticky, keep adding flour until the dough is "dry" (not sweating) again. The egg proteins help to make the dough a bit more plastic.

Roll the dough out to a pancake about ½"–¾" thick, and cut it into strips. I wedge a butterknife under the strips to lift them up (they break easily) and transfer them over to the pie. Start a base layer with about ½" of empty space between the strips. Then create a second layer at a 45° degree angle. If you have any leftover dough, don't eat it.

Rub the eggwhite over the lattice (I use a finger but it's easier with a brush) and sprinkle a bit of cinnamon (for the looks, not for the taste). I sprinkle the cinnamon straight from the container (it has the little holes in the cap) from about shoulder height so it spreads evenly.

# 4. Into the oven

*My* pies don't leak. But I never risk it; it's less work to put the spring form on top of a sheet of aluminium foil than to clean up the oven if there is leakage. And to get the whole ensemble in and out of the oven easier I put it on a baking plate. This might influence baking time; I've never experimented with it so I don't know, but keep it in mind when you compare your baking times with mine.

This is where the voodoo magic (aka Experience) comes in. I recommend 60 minutes at 400°F *but...* I set *my* oven to 450°F but the thermostat is off and it runs at a lower temperature than it indicates. The original literature called for a lower temperature (350°) at a longer time (75 minutes) but 60/450 works best at *my* oven. Some experimentation is required here!

You can choose either strategy and just start checking on the pie after about 45 minutes the first time. You want the top to be golden brown, not chocolate brown; at the edges the crust might be a little bit darker but that's ok (especially if you used extra flour for the lattice; the brown sugar content of the side walls will be higher and I guess that makes them darker)

## Leftovers

While your pie is in the oven it is time to get rid of those leftovers. Create simple "apple-turnovers" from leftover dough and filling, put them on a sheet of aluminium foil and place them in the oven. They don't need as long as the entire pie; 30 minutes is usually enough. It's a great way to pre-taste your pie without having to cut it.

# 4. Serving

I bake late at night and let the cake cool off overnight on top of the stove. I'm not sure if putting it outside is beneficial or not but the pie tastes great when it is still a little bit warm (warm means *not* hot. I don't enjoy the pie *hot* but opinions vary). Remove the walls of the spring form; they should come off clean without any help but don't hesitate to use a knife if needed (especially when you forgot to butter the walls. That's a mistake you will make only once).

Best served with whipped cream (it comes in a can and looks like thick milk. Then you use a beater on it to turn it into whipped cream. It's superior over the stuff that comes out of a pressure can). Ice cream is good too, but that's not the way the Dutch eat their pie. An 8" pie will provide about 12 slices that will satisfy most eaters; it's quite heavy (remember 2½ lbs of appels went into this pie)

This is a pie that doesn't go bad very quickly, but if you baked it properly it will be gone at the first serving anyway.