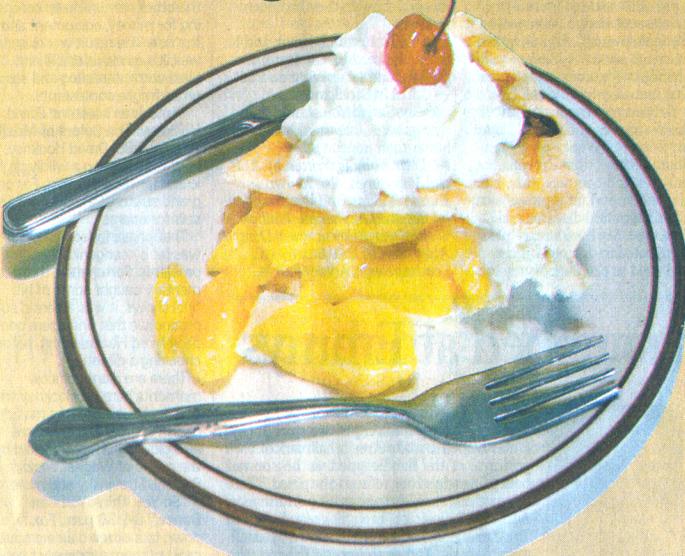


makeyourown | pie crust

# 'Nothing like homemade'



## Introducing a new monthly feature

The make your own feature will appear in the Times-Delta on the third Wednesday of each month. Included with this feature is a special video component to help you master this common culinary feat.

**See for yourself**  
Watch Pete and Elidia Perez make their pie crust at [www.VisaliaTimesDelta.com/Video](http://www.VisaliaTimesDelta.com/Video).



Juan Villa/For the Times-Delta

## The right tools make pie crust a snap



Nick McClellan/Times-Delta

Pete and Elidia Perez show off their peach pie at Pete's Fresh Grill, on the southwest corner of Caldwell Avenue and South Mooney Boulevard. Above: A peach pie at Pete's Fresh Grill in Visalia.

### Never-fail pie crust recipe

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups of flour
- 1 1/4 cup of lard or shortening
- 1 tablespoon of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup of water
- 1 tablespoon of white vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon of baking powder

#### Directions

Mix flour, sugar and salt together in a large bowl. Cut in lard or shortening using a pastry blender.

In a smaller bowl, mix egg, water, vinegar and baking powder. Using a

fork or mixing spoon, stir the egg mixture quickly into the large bowl with the flour. Once the mixture has become dough, divide dough (for multiple pies) and roll it out onto a flat surface, adding flour to make it more manageable so that it does not stick to the surface or roller. Once flat, flip onto pie tin, tucking the dough edges into the rim and cutting off any excess dough.

This recipe makes enough for five pie crusts. After it's been rolled, dough can be placed in the freezer between two sheets of wax paper for up to six months.

— Teresa Douglass

By Nick McClellan

Staff writer

With stone fruit in season, Tulare County cooks are dreaming of that perfect slice of pie.

But while you might have a basket of peaches, a winning recipe and an oven ready to roar, you might not know the secret to the pastry's essential foundation: the crust.

Sure, you can make a quick jaunt to the supermarket. But why not take a creative leap and prepare your own homemade pie crust?

Restaurateur Pete Perez, owner and operator of Pete's Fresh Grill in the Foods Co. shopping center on South Mooney Boulevard, is a good person to turn to for advice. He makes pie crusts for peach pies and quiches at their restaurant, which has operated under Pete's name for almost three years.

"It only takes a few minutes to do it yourself, and it tastes a little different than what you buy at the store," Perez said.

#### The basics

It's important to use the correct tools. When mixing the flour for the dough, a pastry blender can make all the difference.

"If you don't mix it right, one side has more flavor than the other," Perez said.

Once your flour is mixed, flatten the dough onto a hard surface. Pete's wife, Elidia, uses a cloth napkin, but other cooks prefer wax paper.

When forming the pie crusts, work with a healthy, fist-sized hunk of dough. Roll it out onto the hard surface with a roller.

Elidia Perez uses plenty of flour at this point to keep the edges from sticking to the rolling pin.

### Inside/6D

More recipes, including Better Than My Mother's Pie Crust.

### Better Than My Mother's pie crust

Yields 2 generous pie crusts

- 1 1/4 cup shortening
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 5 tablespoons water
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vinegar

1. In a large bowl by hand or in the bowl of a food processor, cut shortening into flour and salt until it looks like coarse cornmeal.

2. In a separate small bowl, beat water, egg and vinegar together; stir liquid mixture into

flour mixture.

3. Gather dough into a large ball and chill.

4. Pinch off enough dough to form a crust (about 1/2 of the ball) and roll out to fit pan.

5. If your recipe calls for a baked pie shell, bake crust in a preheated 425-degree oven for 10-12 minutes; otherwise, proceed with the pie recipe. The remaining dough can be refrigerated, tightly sealed, for 2 to 3 weeks.

— Deb McNeill

### Pies

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stage to make sure the dough is easy to work with.

After the dough has been rolled out far enough to fill a pie tin beyond the rim, grasp the sides of the flattened dough with floured hands and place it into the tin. At this point, roll the edges of the dough into the edge of the tin, cutting off the excess.

Before adding the pie filling, mold the edges of the dough into

ridges.

Elidia Perez has a specific technique when forming the outside crusts of her pies, but you can use your own.

Once you've placed your pie filling, take a flattened part of the dough and tuck beneath the folded ridges of the pie crust on top of the filling. Pete Perez suggests brushing egg whites onto the outside to give the crust a golden-brown finish. Now you're ready to bake.

"There's nothing like the taste of homemade," Pete Perez says.

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