

Lemon-Lime Meringue Pie

CINDY PAWLACYN

'Mustards Grill Cookbook'

When an order of this pie makes its way through the Mustards dining room, diners inevitably gawk, point, and pledge to leave room for that billowing mountain of meringue.

Makes one 11-inch tart or 9-inch deep-dish pie and serves 10 to 12.

1 pre-baked 11-inch tart or 9-inch deep-dish pie crust

Filling:

6 large eggs

1 1/2 cups granulated sugar

1/2 cup freshly squeezed lime juice (4 to 6 limes)

1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 2 lemons, zested before juicing)

1 cup heavy whipping cream

1 Tbsp. grated lemon zest

Meringue:

3/4 cup egg whites (about 6 large)

1/4 tsp. cream of tartar

1 1/2 cups firmly packed brown sugar

Prepare the pie crust and place in the oven to bake.

About 15 minutes before the crust will finish baking, make the filling. Whisk the eggs and granulated sugar together in a bowl until smooth. Whisk in the lime juice and lemon juice, until smooth. Whisk in the cream, then strain the filling through a fine-mesh sieve into a large measuring cup and stir in the lemon zest. The filling will be quite liquid at this point.

Without removing the crust from the oven, pour the filling into the crust (it's easier to do it this way than to juggle the full pie shell from counter to oven). Reduce the oven heat to 325 degrees and bake the pie for 35 to 40 minutes, until the center is just set. Cool the pie on a rack, then refrigerate until cold.

To prepare the meringue, place the egg whites and cream of tartar in an electric mixer fitted with the whip attachment. Place the brown sugar in a small, heavy saucepan, add water to cover, attach a candy thermometer to the pan, and turn the heat on high. When the sugar is at about 240 degrees, start whipping the whites on high speed (they should be foamy and starting to thicken before you add the sugar). When the sugar is at the high soft-ball stage (245 degrees), remove the thermometer from the sugar and, with the mixer still running, carefully avoiding the whip, pour the sugar into the egg whites in a thin stream. When steam starts to come off the whites, add the sugar more quickly. When all sugar has been added, continue whipping until firm but soft peaks form. The meringue should still be quite warm.

Quickly spread the meringue on top of the pie, shaping it with a rubber spatula to form a high, smooth dome. With the back of a soup spoon, make decorative waves, working quickly because as the meringue cools it will become stiff and difficult to shape. Preheat the broiler and place the pie on a lower oven rack to brown, turning every few seconds to brown evenly. Store the finished pie in the refrigerator, but plan on serving it within 3 to 5 hours, as the meringue may start to weep.