

Ginger Sweet-Potato Pie with Cinnamon Meringue

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Yield: Serves 6 to 8

ingredients

For filling

2 pounds sweet potatoes (about 4 medium)
3/4 cup milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/3 cup sugar
2 large eggs
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
a pinch of ground cloves
1/4 cup crystallized ginger* (about 2 ounces)

pastry dough

pie weights or raw rice for weighting shell

For meringue

1 cup sugar
2 teaspoons cinnamon
5 large egg whites

*available at some supermarkets and specialty foods shops

preparation

Make filling:

Preheat oven to 400°F. and line a baking sheet with foil.

Prick sweet potatoes in several places with a fork and on baking sheet bake in middle of oven until very soft, 1 to 1 1/4 hours. When potatoes are cool enough to handle, halve and scoop out enough flesh to measure 2 cups, reserving remainder for another use. In a food processor purée flesh with all remaining filling ingredients except ginger until smooth. Finely chop ginger and stir into filling. Filling may be made 1 day ahead and chilled, covered. Bring filling to room temperature before proceeding.

On a lightly floured surface with a floured rolling pin roll out dough into a 14-inch round (about 1/8 inch thick) and fit into a 9-inch (1-quart) glass pie plate. Trim dough, leaving a 1/2-inch overhang, and crimp edge decoratively. With a fork prick bottom and side of shell all over. Chill shell 30 minutes, or until firm.

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Line shell with foil and fill with pie weights or raw rice. Bake shell in middle of oven 25 minutes

and carefully remove foil and weights or rice. Bake shell until just pale golden, about 10 minutes more. Pour filling into shell and bake pie in middle of oven 40 minutes.

Make meringue after pie has baked 30 minutes:

In a large metal bowl stir together sugar and cinnamon until combined well. Set bowl over a saucepan of simmering water and add whites, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Remove bowl from heat and with an electric mixer beat whites until they hold stiff, glossy peaks.

Mound meringue in center of hot filling and spread almost to edge of pie. Bake pie in middle of oven until meringue is golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes more. Serve pie warm or at room temperature.

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