

Salt and Serenity

Canada Day Strawberry Slab Pie

Makes one 9x13 inch pie which will serve 12-14.

Brown Butter Dough:

227 grams (1 cup) unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch pieces

198 grams (1 cup) firmly packed light brown sugar

3 grams (½ teaspoon) kosher salt

2 large eggs, at room temperature

4 grams (1 teaspoon) pure vanilla extract

383 grams (3 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour

Strawberry Filling:

1360 grams (12 cups) strawberries, hulled and halved, or quartered if large

Zest of 1 lemon

2 tablespoons lemon juice

3 Tablespoons brown sugar

½ teaspoon kosher salt

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 Tablespoons tapioca starch (also called tapioca flour)

Assembly:

1 large egg, whisked with 1 Tablespoon water

2 Tablespoons Turbinado or coarse sanding sugar

1. **Make dough:** Put the butter in a large saucepan. Cook, stirring, over medium heat until nutty brown and the milk solids are dark brown, 6 to 7 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and add the brown sugar and salt. Stir until the sugar is almost dissolved. Set aside for 10 minutes to cool slightly. Using your fingertip, check the temperature of the batter—it should be warm but not hot.
2. Add the eggs and vanilla and stir until well blended. Add the flour and stir until a smooth, soft dough forms.
3. Flatten dough into a 6x9 inch rectangle, wrap in wax paper or plastic wrap and freeze for about 20 minutes. Take about 2/3 of the dough and roll it out between 2 sheets of parchment paper into a 12x16 inch rectangle, about 1/8 inch thick. Roll the remaining piece of dough between 2 sheets of parchment to a ¼ inch thickness. The shape of this smaller piece of dough does not matter as you will be cutting maple leaves out of this piece. Chill both sheets of dough for 15 minutes in the freezer.
4. **Make filling:** Place strawberries in a large mixing bowl. Add lemon zest and juice, sugar, salt, vanilla and tapioca starch. Stir until all the fruit is evenly coated. Set aside and let macerate while dough finishes chilling.
5. Remove the larger sheet of dough from the freezer. Peel off the parchment paper and gently press the dough rectangle into the quarter sheet pan, folding the excess dough over to form a double thickness rim. Decoratively flute the edges. Transfer pan to refrigerator and chill for 30 minutes.

6. Position one oven rack in the lower third (just below center) of the oven. Position the second rack in the upper third of the oven, (just above center). Place a half sheet pan on the lower rack and preheat oven to 375°F. You will place your slab pie directly on that hot baking sheet — this little extra boost of heat will help prevent a soggy bottom.
7. Meanwhile, line another baking sheet with parchment paper. Remove second sheet of dough from freezer. Using a maple leaf cookie cutter (or any shape you like), cut out about 12 leaves, re-rolling dough as necessary. Transfer leaves to parchment-lined baking sheet and refrigerate.
8. Remove crust from fridge. Transfer berry mixture to crust, patting the berries down into a roughly even layer. Top berries with maple leaves. Brush leaves and edge of pie with egg wash. Sprinkle with coarse sugar.
9. Place pie on preheated baking sheet on lower rack. Bake for 30 minutes. Move pie to upper rack (keep it on the baking sheet) and bake for an additional 15 minutes. Check pie, if edges are getting too brown, cover with strips of foil to protect them from burning. Bake for a final 15 minutes until filling is bubbly and maple leaf cut outs are golden brown.
10. Run a small knife around the edge of the pie while it's warm. Transfer the pie in its quarter sheet pan to a wire rack. Let cool for at least 2 hours before cutting and serving from the pan.