

Salt and Serenity

Cider-Caramel Apple Pie

The filling recipe for this pie was created by the pie queen Erin Jeanne McDowell. She literally wrote [The Book on Pie](#). She had the brilliant idea to reduce apple cider to a caramel-like consistency. It creates the most intense apple flavoured pie you will ever eat.

The crust for this recipe was created by Paul Arguin, winner of the 2017 National Pie Championship. It has become my go-to pie crust.

Pie Dough:

358 grams (2¾ cups) all-purpose flour
⅛ teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
57 grams (4 tablespoons) cold shortening
170 grams (1½ sticks) cold unsalted butter, cut into cubes
2 teaspoons cider vinegar
6 Tablespoons cold water

Cider Caramel:

1.81 kilograms (8 cups) apple cider
57 grams (4 tablespoons) unsalted butter
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract

Apple Filling:

1.36 kilograms (8 large) Honeycrisp apples (or another good baking apple), peeled and thinly sliced into ¼-inch slices
212 grams (1 cup) packed light brown sugar
40 grams (⅓ cup) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Pie Assembly:

1 egg mixed with 1 tablespoon cold water and a pinch of kosher salt
2 Tablespoons Turbinado or coarse sugar

1. **Make the dough:** In the bowl of a food processor, mix the flour, cinnamon, sugar, salt and baking powder. Add the shortening and process until well incorporated. Add the butter and pulse until pea-size nuggets of butter remain. Add the vinegar and water, and pulse until dough is just holding together. **DO NOT** continue processing until dough comes together in a ball.

2. Dump dough onto the counter and gently knead it together. Divide into 2 even discs. Roll out each disc, between 2 sheets of parchment paper into a rough 12-inch circle, about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick. Chill dough circles while you prepare the caramel filling.
3. **Make Cider Caramel:** In a large, wide heavy-duty pot (I used my 7-quart Le Creuset for this), bring the apple cider to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue cooking, without stirring, until the cider reduces to a sauce with the consistency of thin caramel. This will take 45-60 minutes, depending on the size of your pot. Check the progress every 15 minutes at the start, and then more frequently once it starts to thicken.
4. Add butter, salt and vanilla to the caramel and then pour it into a heatproof bowl to cool slightly, about 30 minutes. You can make the caramel ahead of time, but because of the high amount of pectin in apples, the caramel sauce will become jelly-like at room temperature. You will just need to warm it in the microwave in 15 second bursts, until it becomes fluid again. It shouldn't be hot when you add it to the apples, a little bit warm is fine.
5. **Make Apple Filling:** Place sliced apples in a large bowl. Add brown sugar, flour, cinnamon and cooled cider caramel. Use your hands to gently mix until the apples are thoroughly coated.
6. **Assemble Pie:** Remove dough circles from fridge and let sit for about 5-10 minutes until dough is slightly pliable. Line 9-inch pie plate with one circle of dough. Arrange apples in the piecrust. If you place the apples in overlapping concentric circles, like a rosette, there will be fewer air pockets between the fruit, reducing the chance of the top crust collapsing after baking. Once you reach the upper edge of the pie pan, begin to make the circles smaller to mound the filling higher in the center give the baked pie a domed appearance.
7. Place other dough circle on top and press the edges of the top and bottom crusts gently together to seal. Using scissors, trim excess dough away, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch overhang. Tuck the overhang under itself, all the way around the pie. Crimp the edges of the crust as desired. Place pie in fridge to chill for 30 minutes.
8. Preheat oven to 425°F. If you have a baking/pizza stone, place it on the bottom rack. This will help avoid a soggy bottom.
9. Place the pie on a baking sheet to catch any bubbling over. Brush top crust of chilled pie with egg wash and sprinkle generously with turbinado sugar. Use a small sharp knife to cut a few small vents in the crust so that the steam can escape. Bake the pie on the stone or bottom rack until the crust is deeply golden and the filling is bubbling up through the vents, 40-50 minutes. Check the pie after 25 minutes. If the top crust is browning too quickly, reduce the

temperature to 375°F and tent the edges with foil. Cool the pie for several hours, or even overnight before serving.

