

Baked Banana Cream Pie with candied Cherries

Ingredients:

For the Pie:

- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 3 cups milk
- 3 large eggs separated
- 4 ripe bananas mashed
- 1 8-oz. container Paradise candied red cherries, halved but reserve a few whole for the topping (about 10)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 baked 10-inch pie crust use your favorite recipe or my oil pie crust



For the Meringue:

- 3 egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 10 whole candied cherries for topping

Directions:

Get started:

Preheat your oven to 375-degrees and prepare your pie crust according to your recipe (or use a store-bought crust or better yet my oil pie crust). Before baking, use a fork to prick the bottom and sides of the crust several times. This prevents it from puffing up or shrinking during baking.

Bake the crust for 12-15 minutes, depending on how your oven is regulated or until lightly golden. Let the pie shell cool completely.

Make the custard:

In a medium saucepan, use a whisk to beat the sugar and cornstarch together. Gradually whisk in the milk until smooth.

In a separate bowl, whisk the egg yolks. Temper the yolks by slowly drizzling about 1/2 cup of the hot milk mixture into the yolks while whisking constantly. Pour the yolk mixture back into the saucepan with the remaining milk mixture.

Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the custard thickens and comes to a simmer.

Remove from heat and stir in the mashed bananas and chopped candied cherries. Stir in two teaspoons of vanilla extract.

Pour the banana-cherry custard into the cooled pie crust.

Make the meringue:

In a clean, dry mixing bowl, beat the egg whites with the salt using an electric mixer (or by hand) until soft peaks form.

Gradually add the sugar, beating until stiff, glossy peaks form. Beat in the vanilla extract.

Assemble the pie:

Spread the meringue evenly over the custard, making decorative swirls with a spoon or spatula.

Place the reserved cherries on top to decorate.

Send briefly to the 375-degree oven to brown until golden. This takes about 10 to 12 minutes, depending on how your oven is regulated.

Serve immediately or keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

ENJOY!