



ANSON MILLS

Chocolate Cream Pie

Yield

One 9-inch pie

Time

30 minutes to make the filling, 3 hours to chill it, and about 5 minutes to make the whipped cream and top the pie

Baking Notes

Valrhona bittersweet chocolate with 61 percent chocolate liquor tops the short list of candidates for this pie. A French chocolate from the Rhone Valley, Valrhona is smooth and pleasantly balanced—very soothing to the palate—with fruity and caramel notes and a touch of tannin underneath.

Believe it or not, the eggs are as important to this pie as the chocolate. Get the highest quality and freshest you can, eggs whose whites have actual body and stay close to the yolk when you crack them and whole yolks have deep yellow pigment.

If it sounds fussy to weigh yolks or whites, consider that within the parameters of “large,” eggs may present striking irregularities in weight. Sometimes the yolks are teeny-tiny and the whites copious. Other times the yolks are large and the whites meager. When it comes to custard, such irregularities can be important! It’s no big deal to weigh—you’re separating the eggs, anyway.

We aren’t big fans of the two moorings within an egg intended to keep the yolk in place in its shell. Called *chalazae*, these lumpy white strands of tissue that tighten up when cooked can really put the hex on a satiny filling. Which is why we take pains to eliminate them either by straining before cooking or after.

Equipment Mise en Place

To make this recipe, you will need a digital kitchen scale; a medium heatproof mixing bowl; a whisk; a fine-mesh strainer; a deep, narrow bowl; a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan; a wooden spoon; a rubber spatula; a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment or handheld mixer (if using a handheld mixer, you’ll also need a large bowl); and a pastry bag fitted with a large plain or star tip if you’ll be piping the whipped cream onto the pie.

Ingredients

for the filling

6 large egg yolks (see Baking Notes), plus 1 additional yolk, if needed
0.6 ounces Anson Mills Colonial Style Fine Cloth-Bolted Pastry Flour
20 ounces half-and-half
2.4 ounces sugar
¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

2.5 ounces cold unsalted butter
6.5 ounces Valrhona baking chocolate (61 percent cocoa liquor), finely chopped
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract

1 recipe Graham Pâte Sucrée

for the topping

16 ounces cold heavy cream
3 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Directions

- 1. Make the filling:** Set a medium heatproof mixing bowl on a digital kitchen scale, turn on the scale, and drop in the yolks; they should weigh at least 3.75 ounces. If they do not, throw in an additional yolk. Whisk to combine, add the flour, and then whisk again until the mixture is satiny smooth and free of lumps. Set a fine-mesh strainer over a deep, narrow bowl.
- 2.** In a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan, heat the half-and-half, sugar, and salt over medium-high heat until simmering, stirring occasionally to dissolve the sugar. As soon as the mixture reaches a simmer, lower the heat slightly. Gradually whisk about 1 cup of the hot half-and-half into the yolk mixture to warm it. Whisk the tempered yolks until well combined, scrape them into the simmering milk, and whisk vigorously until the mixture simmers and thickens, 10 to 15 seconds. Remove from the heat, add the butter immediately, and whisk to cool. Whisk in the chocolate, and then stir in the vanilla. Pour the filling through the fine-mesh strainer, knocking a heavy spoon or ladle against the side of the strainer to jolt the filling through. Scrape the strained filling into the pie shell, smooth the surface, and cover flush with plastic wrap. Refrigerate the pie until cool and set, about 3 hours.
- 3. Make the topping:** Chill the bowl of a stand mixer or a large mixing bowl if using a handheld mixer. Place the cream, sugar, and vanilla in the chilled bowl of a stand mixer. Whip on low speed until the cream bubbles, and then increase the speed to medium and continue beating until the whisk leaves a trail in the cream, about 40 seconds. Increase the speed slightly and continue to beat until the cream forms soft, droopy peaks when the whisk is lifted, about 20 seconds. Do not overbeat or the pie will not be pretty! Remove the pie from refrigerator and peel off the plastic. Swirl or pipe the whipped cream over the pie.