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Pumpkin Silk Pie with a Gingersnap Crust

Serves 8

A great alternative to the classic pumpkin pie is our version of pumpkin silk pie. While all the traditional pumpkin pie flavors are there, this pie has a lighter, more airy texture that's greatly appreciated after a large Thanksgiving meal. The nutty, gingersnap crust is a delicious complementary flavor to the pumpkin filling that assembles quickly. Another dish to prepare ahead of time, this pie is a tasty twist for a fine finale to the Thanksgiving table!

Crust Ingredients:

- 1 package ginger snaps (about 30-40 small cookies),
about 3 - 3.5 cups when crumbled
- 1 cup pecans
- 12 tablespoons butter, melted

Filling Ingredients:

- 2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
- 1/2 cup cold water
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 (15 oz) can pumpkin puree
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin spice blend
(plus a little extra for garnishing)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla
- 2 cups whipped cream (see instructions below)

Whipped Cream:

- 3 cups heavy whipping cream
- 2-3 tablespoons powdered sugar, to taste
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla

Directions:

Prepare the Crust:

1. In a food processor, and the ginger snaps and pecans. Pulse until crushed and coarse crumbs result. Add the melted butter to the crumbs. Place the crumbs in a 9-inch springform pan by patting firmly into place. Bake the crust for 5-8 minutes at 325°F until lightly browned. Thoroughly cool the crust. (A 9-inch pie dish may also be used -- just press the crumb crust on both the bottom and sides of the pie plate.)

Prepare the Filling:

2. In a small bowl, sprinkle the gelatin into cold water and stir until combined, let stand and soften for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, in a saucepan over low heat, combine the egg yolks, pumpkin puree, milk, brown sugar, pumpkin spice, and vanilla. Add the gelatin water, stir, and cook over low heat for 10 minutes whisking frequently. Cool, then chill in the refrigerator until cold, about 1 hour.

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Whip the Cream:

3. Whip the heavy cream with powdered sugar and vanilla until stiff peaks form.

Fold Cream into Filling:

4. Gently fold 2 cups of the whipped cream into the chilled pumpkin filling until combined. Pour the pumpkin filling into the cooled baked crust, and refrigerate until set, about an 1 hour.

Assemble:

5. With the remaining whip cream, spread or pipe a layer on the top of the chilled pie. Sprinkle with a dusting layer of pumpkin spice or cinnamon, and keep chilled until it's time to serve.