

Banana Cream Pie

Makes One 9" Pie

Banana Cream Pie is a favorite across many generations for a good reason! The memorable flavors of sweet banana and creamy vanilla custard are wonderfully compatible and so delicious. This recipe introduces a playful peanut butter graham cracker crust that can't be beat.

Peanut Butter Graham Cracker Crust:

4 tablespoons butter, plus
1 tablespoon butter for greasing the pie pan
1-1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
(roughly 14 whole graham cracker sheets)
1/4 cup white sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup creamy peanut butter

Meringue:

3 large pasteurized egg whites, room temperature
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
1/3 cup superfine caster sugar

Prepare the crust:

Generously butter a 9" pie pan. In a food processor, pulse the graham crackers into fine crumbs. In a medium sized bowl, combine the graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and salt. Melt 4 tablespoons butter in the microwave and in a small bowl, stir together with the peanut butter until combined. Slowly add the butter and peanut butter to the graham cracker mix, using your hands to combine until the crust begins to stick together. Press the mixture evenly to the bottom and up the sides of the buttered pie pan. Chill the pie crust for about 2 hours.

Make the custard and banana filling:

In a medium sauce pan, heat the milk over medium until milk is just scalding. (You will know it is scalding when the milk reaches 180°F and it begins to steam and bubbles start to form.) In a large bowl, whisk together the cream, eggs, egg yolks, sugar, brown sugar, salt, and cornstarch until smooth. Stream in 1/2-cup of the hot milk stirring continuously. Gradually add the remaining hot milk continuing to stir. Pour the mixture back into the saucepan used to heat the milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring continually, until the mixture comes to a soft boil, stirring all the while. Remove from heat. While hot, add the vanilla extract and the cubes of butter. Stir until the butter is melted and combined into the mixture. Set the mixture aside to cool to room temperature. Place a piece of plastic wrap on the surface of the pastry cream to prevent the formation of a "skin." Refrigerate for one hour or until cooled. Arrange the banana slices in a single layer on the chilled graham cracker crust. Pour the custard filling on top of the bananas. Cover with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for 4 hours.

Make the meringue:

In a stand mixer set to low speed, beat the egg whites until they are frothy. Add the cream of tartar and increase the mixer speed to medium. Continue beating the egg whites until large bubbles form around the edges and the whites begin to get fluffy. Gradually add the sugar one teaspoon at a time until fully incorporated. Continue beating on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form. Spoon the egg whites over the top of the custard, evenly spreading and covering the pie all the way to the edge of the crust. Use the back of a spoon to lift up the egg whites to create varying peaks. Use a culinary torch to toast and gently caramelize the meringue. Serve and enjoy!

Custard Filling:

2 cups whole milk
1 cup heavy cream
3 large eggs
3 large yolks
(reserve the whites for the meringue)
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt
4 tablespoons cornstarch
1/2 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 1/2" cubes
2 large bananas, sliced