

Classic Chocolate Custard Pie: My Favorite Rich, Creamy, and Nostalgic Southern Dessert

Mrs. Betty Hamrick's Classic Chocolate Custard Pie: A Two-Pie Vintage Recipe



TIME

15 to 25 min

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INGREDIENTS

Swaps and Notes:

Milk: While whole milk is best for richness, you can successfully use 2% milk. I don't recommend skim milk, as the low-fat content can affect the luxurious mouthfeel of the custard.

Pie Shells: If you're not up for baking your own, a good-quality store-bought pie crust works perfectly! Just ensure they are fully baked and cooled. A graham cracker crust also works for a no-bake variation, though it's less traditional.

Vanilla Extract: While not listed in the original recipe, I often sneak in 1 teaspoon of pure vanilla extract at the very end with the butter for an extra layer of flavor.

DIRECTIONS

1. The key to this recipe is the slow, gentle heat of the double boiler. Don't rush this step!
2. **Step 1: Prep the Dry Ingredients:** In the top of a double boiler (or a heat-proof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water), whisk together the sugar, cocoa powder, and all-purpose flour. This step is crucial to remove any lumps from the cocoa and flour before adding the wet ingredients.
3. **Step 2: Combine and Whisk:** Add the 2 large egg yolks and the 4 cups of milk to the dry mixture. Whisk everything together thoroughly until the mixture is completely smooth and uniform in color.
4. **Step 3: Cook the Custard:** Place the double boiler over simmering water (ensure the bottom of the top bowl doesn't touch the water). Cook over the simmering water, stirring almost constantly, until the mixture thickens into a thick, glossy custard. This can take anywhere from 15 to 25 minutes. The custard is ready when it coats the back of a spoon and holds a line drawn through it with your finger.
5. **Step 4: Finish the Custard:** Immediately remove the top pot/bowl from the heat. Stir in the butter (21 stick) until it is completely melted and glossy. The butter adds incredible richness and a beautiful shine to the filling.
6. **Step 5: Fill and Cool:** Carefully pour the hot custard evenly into the two pre-baked and cooled pie shells.
7. **Step 6: Chill and Set:** Let the pies cool to room temperature on the counter for about 1-2 hours. Once cooled, transfer them to the refrigerator and chill until set, which usually takes at least 4 hours, but preferably overnight. The custard must be completely

cold and firm to slice cleanly.

SWAPS & NOTES

Pie Shells 2 (9-inch) regular pie shells Must be pre-baked (blind baked) and completely cooled.

Sugar 2 cups Standard granulated white sugar.

Cocoa Powder 4 1/4 cup Use high-quality, unsweetened cocoa powder for the best flavor.

All-Purpose Flour 2 1/4 cup This is the thickening agent.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

The Double Boiler is Non-Negotiable: A double boiler (or bain-marie) is critical because it controls the heat, preventing the delicate egg yolks from curdling.

If you don't have one, place a stainless steel bowl over a saucepan with an inch or two of simmering water.

Stir, Stir, Stir: You must stir the custard almost constantly while it cooks.

This prevents the bottom from setting too quickly or scorching, which results in a lumpy, burnt-tasting pie.

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Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/classic-chocolate-custard-pie-my-favorite-rich-creamy-and-nostalgic-southern-dessert/>