

# U The Lexingtonienne U

## LEMON MERINGUE PIE

*Adapted from Bon Appetit April 2011*

- 1 baked 9" pie shell\*
- 2 C sugar, divided
- 5 tsp cornstarch
- 2/3 C fresh lemon juice
- 4 large eggs
- 1 Tbsp finely grated lemon peel
- 6 large egg whites at room temperature
- 1/4 tsp cream of tartar
- 1/4 tsp salt

*\*Bon Appetit included a recipe for a sugary graham pie crust. Because I didn't want such a sugary crust and because Eleanora encourages me to see how fast I can cook (**har har**), I used a Pillsbury refrigerated pie crust that I rolled out, put in a glass pie plate, and baked according to package directions before filling. I baked it while I prepared the filling and poured the filling into the hot crust.*

Whisk 1 C sugar and cornstarch in a heavy medium saucepan until no lumps remain. Gradually whisk in lemon juice, then add eggs 1 at a time, stirring after each addition. Whisk in grated lemon peel, then whisk constantly over medium heat until filling thickens and boils. (It seems like nothing is happening for a bit, then suddenly it's thick. Take it off the heat as soon as this happens.) Remove from heat and whisk to smooth. Pour into hot baked pie crust and smooth the top with a spatula.

With an electric mixer, beat the 6 egg whites, cream of tartar, and salt in a large mixing bowl until frothy. Keeping the mixer running, gradually add 1 C sugar. Continue beating until glossy and stiff.

Spread meringue over hot pie filling, sealing the meringue to the crust at the edges. Use a spatula to form peaks and swirls in the meringue.

Bake at 375 for about 15 minutes, or until the meringue is golden brown. Cool completely on a rack before serving. The pie is best served within a day or two and should be kept in the refrigerator.



**A WORD ABOUT MERINGUE.** *Bon Appetit*, in my opinion, did not include nearly enough basic info about meringue in their article. Here are some basics to know before you start:

- You want to anchor the meringue to the pie crust because otherwise the meringue will shrink away from the edges. (To do this, just gently push the meringue to the pie crust with a spatula. It's very easy to do; just make sure you do it.)
- The meringue needs to be applied to HOT pie filling. This is because meringue is mostly eggs, and the hot filling helps to cook the meringue and any dangerous pathogens in the eggs. The oven cooks the outside part of the meringue, and the hot filling cooks the underneath part. If the bottom part of the meringue doesn't cook, it's going to melt and be watery. So before you make the pie filling, have all the meringue ingredients out and ready to go. The second you pour the filling into the crust, start your meringue so that the filling will still be hot. (However, don't make the meringue in advance -- it isn't stable enough to sit on the counter and wait around.)
- If you have the *Joy of Cooking*, I highly recommend reading their section on meringue before you begin. But if you don't, just heeding these basic tips will help ensure a successful meringue. It really was much easier to do than I expected!

