

CHOCOLATE MERINGUE PIE

Adapted from the Joy of Cooking

- 1 (9") pie crust (I like the Pillsbury refrigerated kind that you roll out), baked according to package directions
- 1 C sugar
- 1/4 C cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp salt, divided
- 2 1/2 C whole milk
- 5 large egg yolks
- 2 T unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 1 T vanilla extract
- 4 oz unsweetened baker's chocolate, finely chopped
- 6 large egg whites, at room temperature
- 1/4 tsp cream of tartar

In a medium, heavy saucepan, whisk sugar, cornstarch, and 1/4 tsp salt until well blended. Gradually whisk in milk, then add egg yolks, whisking rapidly until there are no yellow streaks. Bring the mixture to a simmer over medium heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula. Remove from the heat, making sure to scrape all corners of the pan with the spatula. Whisk until smooth. Return to the heat, continue whisking, and bring to a simmer and cook for 1 minute.

Remove pan from the stove and stir in butter, vanilla, and chocolate until totally blended and smooth. Spoon the filling into the prepared pie crust, and place a sheet of plastic wrap directly over the filling (to prevent a skin from forming). Start the next step immediately.

With an electric mixer, beat the 6 egg whites, cream of tartar, and 1/4 tsp 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.

