

# Easy as Pie



Pie Recipes To Sweeten  
Up Your Holidays

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# **WELCOME**



The Machine Shed Restaurant has been making pies from scratch since 1978 – this holiday season we are here to share our tips and tricks to make your own Shed pie at home!

Cindy Johnson, our expert baker from The Machine Shed in Rockford, IL, has been baking pies at the Shed for over 20 years. In this eBook, Cindy shares helpful tips to help you prepare the perfect pie, as well as everything you need to know to make her favorite pie and crust recipes. Too busy to bake your own pie this holiday season? We have you covered—pick up a home-made pie from The Shed bakery. This year—let The Machine Shed Restaurant make your holiday season—easy as pie!



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INTERVIEW WITH CINDY





# Master Baker

## GET TO KNOW CINDY

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There's nothing "as American as apple pie." Fruity, tart, cream filled or savory- at The Shed, we can't seem to pass it up, especially when Cindy's baking!

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### **How many years have you been at The Machine Shed?**

I have been with The Machine Shed for 22 years and 6 months. I came to Heart of America with 20 years of baking experience under my belt. During my interview, the general manager questioned me for an hour on baking—and I must have answered right because he hired me on the spot! I have been baking for the Rockford Machine Shed ever since.

### **What age did you start baking?**

I started baking when I was 8 or 9 years old—I had to stand on a chair in my mom's kitchen to even reach the counter! I came from a large family with a total of 11 children and I was responsible for cooking for my other siblings. My favorite was baking dessert for lunch and dinner, it would be gone right away.

**What inspired you to become a baker?**

I love the expression on a person's face when they bite into a fabulous dessert.

**What is your favorite thing to bake?**

I like to bake everything. There is nothing that stands out above the rest—but I do enjoy putting together desserts for a special occasion.

**What is your favorite thing to eat?**

Hands down, there is nothing more satisfying than fresh bread hot right out of the oven—with butter of course! I could definitely live off of bread, it is so yummy!

**What have you never tried or mastered yet?**

I have never had the opportunity to try baking bagels or donuts. That would be dangerous territory for me!

**What is your most useful tool?**

My trusty Bench Knife—it cuts through the dough, scrapes counters and never wears down. A close second would be my sheeter, which is an electrical rolling pin. I have turned out record number of pies in a short amount of time with that machine.



### **What is the most important tip to be successful baker?**

You want to start with quality ingredients, take the time to measure and mix properly, stir in some love of baking and you will end up with an awesome product. I take a lot of pride in my product and reputation for making wonderful pies.

### **What is your greatest accomplishment?**

My biggest accomplishment would have to be the fantastic pie sales at The Shed. When I started 22 years ago, pie carry outs were non-existent. Last year I personally baked over 3,100 pies for The Machine Shed. Since I have started with the company, I have kept track of how many pies I bake per year—and it has continuously increased.

### **Do you have a favorite story?**

After baking for so many years, there are way too many stories. The one I did learn from was don't stay out all night on your 21st birthday and then try baking without any sleep. Let's just say things got burnt... a lot of things!





PERFECT PIE TIPS







# THE *Perfect Pie*

Tips From Master Baker Cindy Johnson

## FILLING:

### **How do you thin a thick filling?**

In order to thin a thick filling, you will want to use fruit juice in small amounts. Apple juice is a great universal thinner, but you can also experiment with different juices, for different tastes.

### **How do you thicken a thin filling?**

To thicken a filling, you will want to use a slurry of cornstarch and water, and then add it to the filling. This will thicken and cook out during the baking process. You don't want to use too much cornstarch or your filling will taste pasty.

### **What did I do wrong if the filling is cloudy?**

If the filling is cloudy, it is either undercooked or made too far ahead of time.



## CRUST:

### What tips are there for making good dough?

In order to make good dough, you will want to mix it only until it's wet. You want to make sure not to over mix the dough—overworking the dough will cause the crust to get tough. Make sure to handle it as little as possible, rework the dough only a second time and throw away the left overs. To avoid making a flaky crust, you will want to make sure there are not small, pea size pieces of shortening left in the dough.

### What makes a pie crust soggy?

If the pie crust is soggy, it usually means the pie was made too far ahead of time, or, the pie filling was still hot when filling the crust. Make sure to always let the pie filling cool to room temperature before filling the crust.

### Why do pie crusts stick to the pan?

If the pie crusts stick to the pan, the pan was either wet or wasn't cleaned well. Another reason that this occurs, is having holes in the pie crust.

### Why does a pie fall down when served?

There are different reasons that may cause a pie to fall down—one being that the bottom crust may have been too thick. Another is that there were large chunks of shortening left in the pie dough. Other reasons this occurs is the pie was not baked long enough, or the top crust was not sealed to the bottom crust.

### What makes a crust hard?

A crust can turn out hard if the margarine or butter were too hot when making the dough.

### What makes a crust dry and crumbly?

The crust can turn out dry and crumbly when there was not enough butter or margarine added. Another reason is that the crust was not pressed firmly into the pie pan, or it could have been under baked.





## TOPPING:

### **What causes a wet whip topping?**

To avoid a wet whip topping, you do not want to whip at a high speed. You will only want to use a clean, chilled bowl and beater by placing them in the freezer for 30 minutes prior to beating.

### **What causes a wet Meringue?**

A wet Meringue can result from either adding the last half of sugar too fast, or having a foreign matter in the egg whites.

### **What causes a dry Meringue?**

This will occur by either whipping too long before adding the last half of sugar, or by using too many egg whites.



# Crust Recipes

## WHOLE WHEAT PASTRY

1. In a mixing bowl stir together  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup all-purpose flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole wheat flour and  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt.
2. Cut in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup butter until pieces are the size of small peas. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon cold water over part of the mixture; gently toss with a fork. Push to side of the bowl.
3. Repeat until all is moistened, using 1 to 2 tablespoons additional cold water. Form dough into a ball.
4. Cover with plastic wrap until needed.

## INGREDIENTS

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup all-purpose flour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole wheat flour  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup butter  
 2-3 Tbsp. cold water

## 9" DOUBLE CRUST PASTRY

1. Blend flour and lard by hand.
2. Mix well and add water one tablespoon at a time until dough forms a roundish ball that does not crumble (amount of water may vary).
3. Let sit in refrigerator until chilled. Leave overnight for best results.
4. Cut dough in two\* and roll out separate pieces by first sprinkling flour on table and then dusting top of dough with the flour. Roll out matching pie tin shape and a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Bottom piece should be about 2 inches bigger than pie plate.

\*If using for a deep dish pie do not separate.

## INGREDIENTS

3 cups pastry flour  
 1 tsp. salt  
 1 cup lard  
 7-8 Tbsp. cold water



## OIL PASTRY

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1. In a large mixing bowl combine flour and salt. Pour oil and milk into a measuring cup (do not stir); add all at once to flour mixture. Stir lightly with a fork. Form into 2 balls; flatten slightly with your hands.
2. Cut waxed paper into four 12-inch squares. Place each ball of dough between 2 squares of paper. Roll each ball of dough into a circle to edges of paper. (Dampen work surface with a little water to prevent paper from slipping.)

## INGREDIENTS

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2 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup all-purpose flour  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp. salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooking oil  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cold milk

## 9" SINGLE CRUST PASTRY

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1. Stir together flour and salt. Using a pastry blender, cut in shortening until pieces are pea-size.
2. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the water over part of the mixture; gently toss with a fork. Push moistened dough to the side of the bowl. Repeat moistening dough, using 1 tablespoon of the water at a time, until all the dough is moistened. Form dough into a ball.
3. On a lightly floured surface, use your hands to slightly flatten dough. Roll dough from center to edges into a circle about 12 inches in diameter.
4. To transfer pastry, wrap it around the rolling pin. Unroll pastry into a 9-inch pie plate. Ease pastry into pie plate, being careful not to stretch pastry.
5. Trim pastry to  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch beyond edge of pie plate. Fold under extra pastry. Crimp edge as desired. Do not prick pastry if using unbaked.

## INGREDIENTS

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1 $\frac{1}{4}$  cups pastry flour  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup lard  
4-5 Tbsp. cold water



PIE RECIPES





# *Cindy's*

## HOLIDAY CRÈME PIE

### INGREDIENTS

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- 1 ½ cup egg whites
- 1 lb. 4 oz. sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 8 oz. butter crackers
- 1 lb. 8 oz. cream cheese
- 10 oz. w/m  
powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon red food  
coloring
- 1 lb. pineapple
- 12 oz. whipped topping
- 2 oz. pecan pieces

### PIE CRUST

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1. Whip egg whites on #2 speed until stiff.
2. Gradually add sugar till well blended, scrape bowl once and mix again.
3. Add salt and vanilla.
4. Crush Ritz crackers and fold into mixture by hand.
5. Divide evenly in half and gently place into two well-greased pie tins. Work mixture evenly across bottom and sides of pie tins.
6. Bake in 350°F degree oven for 30 minutes or till done and toothpick inserted comes out clean.
7. Cool. (Must be very cool before adding filling).

### FILLING

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1. Beat cream cheese and powdered sugar with paddle on #1 speed.
2. Scrape bowl.
3. Add food coloring and beat on #2 speed till smooth, creamy, and well blended. (Filling should be light pink in color).
4. Divide filling in half and spread into two pie crusts.

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Special Instructions: Sprinkle 8 oz. of pineapple evenly over top of each pie. Using pastry bag, top each pie with whipped cream. Sprinkle top of each pie with 1 oz. pecan pieces.

# Spicy

## SWEET POTATO PIE

### INGREDIENTS

#### CRUST

1½ cups flour, sifted  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 ½ cup butter-flavored shortening  
 3 tablespoons cold water  
 ¼ cup brown sugar  
 1 tablespoon butter  
 ¼ cup chopped pecans

#### TOPPING

¾ cup sugar  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon cinnamon  
 ⅛ Teaspoon cloves  
 ¼ teaspoon nutmeg  
 ½ teaspoon ginger  
 1 teaspoon pumpkin spice  
 ½ teaspoon vanilla  
 2 eggs, beaten  
 ⅔ cup evaporated milk

#### FILLING

2 ½ cups cooked mashed sweet potatoes  
 ¾ cup sugar  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon cinnamon  
 ⅛ Teaspoon cloves  
 ¼ teaspoon nutmeg  
 ½ teaspoon ginger  
 1 teaspoon pumpkin spice  
 ½ teaspoon vanilla  
 2 eggs, beaten  
 ⅔ cup evaporated milk

### PIE CRUST

1. Combine flour and salt in a bowl. Cut in shortening with a pastry blender until crumbly.
2. Sprinkle on water, stirring with a fork to form a ball. Wrap in wax paper. Chill.
3. Roll out on wax paper. Place in a pie plate.
4. In a small dish, combine brown sugar and butter until crumbly. Sprinkle half of pecans on crust bottom in pie plate. Reserve 2 tablespoons of topping, sprinkle remainder over pecans on crust.

### FILLING

1. Preheat oven to 425° F.
2. Place cooked mashed sweet potatoes in a bowl: add sugar, spices and vanilla. Mix well. Add eggs and milk. Mix all together. Pour in crust.

### TOPPING

1. Sprinkle remaining topping and pecans over filling.
2. Cover fluted crust rim with foil strips. Bake in 425° F oven 10 minutes; reduce heat to 350° F and bake for 20 minutes. Cool completely.
3. After it's completely cooked add ¼ bag mini marshmellow spread on top and brown in oven.







# *Wine Cork Pumpkin*

## FALL CRAFTING

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If you have more wine corks than you care to admit (and we promise we won't ask why if you do), we have the perfect project for you! Re-purpose those wine corks you have been saving to make a fabulous Wine Cork Pumpkin—perfect for your Holiday decorations!

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### What you will need:

- Wine corks (make sure they are roughly the same height)
- Orange and white acrylic paint
- Paint brush
- Hot glue gun & glue
- Leaves (real or fake)
- Twine
- Scissors

Step 1: Begin by picking out which wine corks you want to use for your project. We used 30 corks for the pumpkin we made, but you can make your pumpkin as big or little as you desire.

Step 2: Mix the orange and white paints to make different shades of orange. After you have your desired shades, paint the ends of 29 corks. Let the paint on the corks dry.

Step 3: Once the paint on the cork is dry, arrange the corks in rows (5 on the top and bottom row, 6 on the two inside rows and 7 in the middle row) and then glue the corks together. Once the rows are completed, glue the rows on top of each other so it resembles a pumpkin.

Step 4: Finish your project by gluing a cork on the top to act as the stem, as well as the leaves and twine. Then wah-lah.. You now have a cute pumpkin decoration for the Holidays!







SIMPLIFY YOUR HOLIDAYS





# *Simplify* **YOUR HOLIDAYS**

**Dinner  
for 4 only  
\$64.<sup>99</sup>**

Bring home a complete and convenient Holiday Dinner From The Machine Shed!

**ENTREES** - select one:

Boneless Turkey Breast or  
Traditional Boneless Ham

**SIDE DISHES** - select four:

Homestyle Mashed Potatoes with Gravy  
Old-fashioned Sweet Potato Casserole  
Sage Stuffing • Green Bean Casserole  
Green Beans • Corn Casserole • Corn

**INCLUDED WITH EVERY DINNER**

Cranberry Relish • Dinner Rolls

**A SWEET TREAT** - select one:

Fruit Pies: Pumpkin • Apple • Blueberry  
Cherry • Peach • Red Raspberry  
Cream Pies: Banana Cream • Coconut Cream  
Chocolate Cream • Lemon Meringue  
Pumpkin Cream

Orders need to be placed at least 24 hours in advance of pick-up. Cancellation requires 24 hours notice.



# Tools of the Trade

## MACHINE SHED GIFT SHOP

The Machine Shed Gift Shop has everything you need to make baking a success. We offer a variety of products, from baking utensils to pie plates, that will help you with prepping to bake the perfect pie. Visit your local Machine Shed for the items below and be sure to check out our other products for more great ways to prepare your Holiday desserts at home.\*

- ① Cane Set Of 3 Measuring Cups by Mason And Cash ② Batter Bowl by Mason and Cash ③ Measuring Jug by Mason and Cash ④ Pie Saver by Fox Run ⑤ Chicago Metallic Pie Drip Catcher ⑥ Talisman Designs Adjustable Pie Shield ⑦ Batter Bowl by Mason and Cash ⑧ Measuring Jug by Mason and Cash

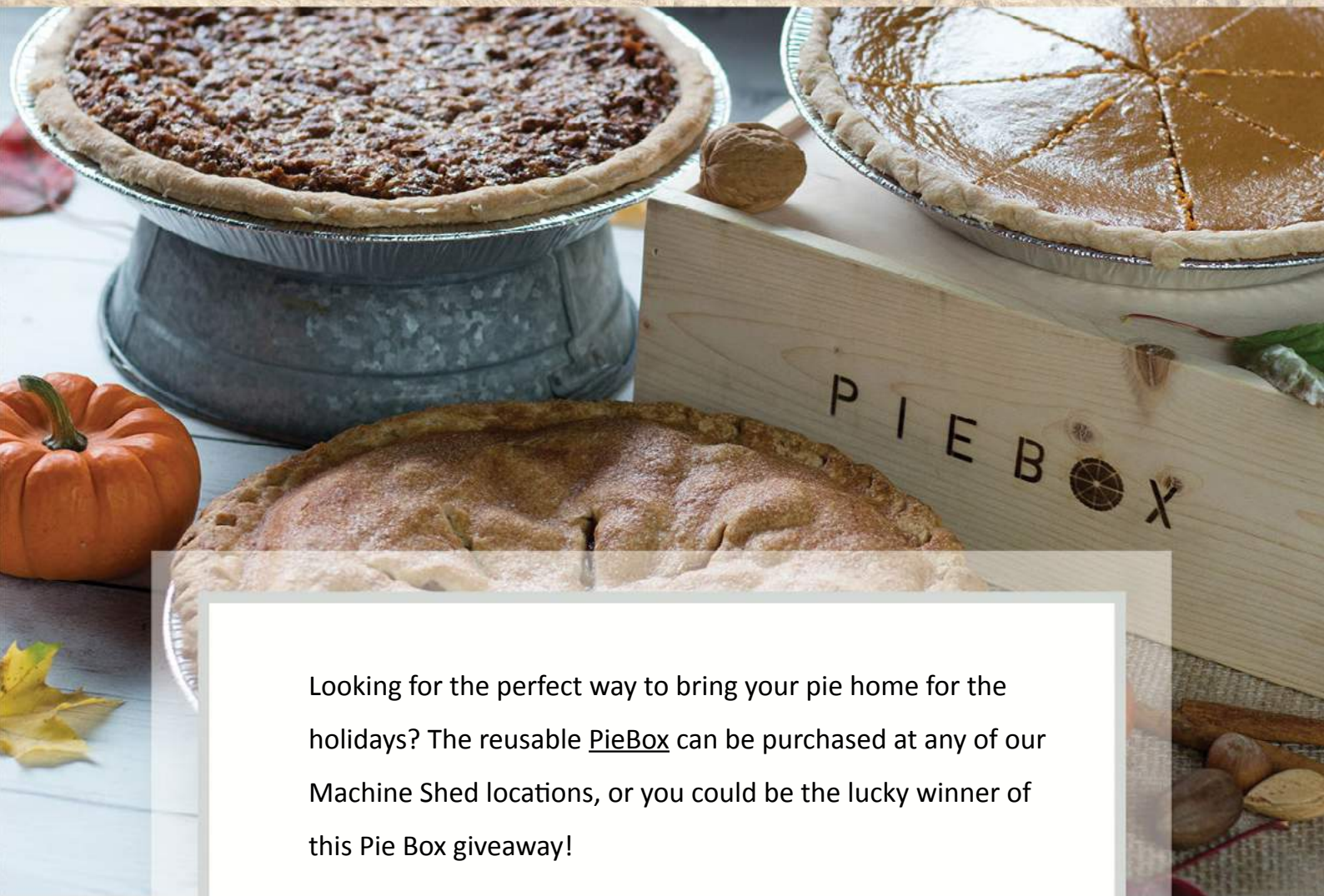
\*Limited availability per store.







# HOLIDAY *Giveaway*



Looking for the perfect way to bring your pie home for the holidays? The reusable [PieBox](#) can be purchased at any of our Machine Shed locations, or you could be the lucky winner of this Pie Box giveaway!

Entering is easy—tell us what your favorite pie is to share with your family for the holidays by commenting on our [Machine Shed Blog](#). Winner will be selected Monday, November 28th so make sure to check back on the Blog to see if you have won!