

Eleanor Braddock's Southern Buttermilk Pie

2 1/2 cups sugar
4 large eggs beaten well
5 ounces buttermilk
2 Tablespoons and 2 teaspoons plain flour
1 stick melted butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 unbaked pie shell*

Mix well by hand in a medium-size bowl (oh, how I love a "one bowl" pie!), then pour the mixture into an unbaked pie shell* (do not prick the pie shell with a fork beforehand). Bake pie at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes until firmly set, then get ready to savor this delicious Southern delicacy...just like Marcus did! I've been making this pie for over thirty years. It's a family favorite for sure, and so easy! The custard is creamy and smooth, while the top bakes to a golden yummy crunch. Enjoy!



*Scroll down for Eleanor's pie crust recipe. Old fashioned deliciousness at its best!

(makes two large crusts)
From the novel *A Beauty So Rare*

This is a wonderful crust that I've been using for years. Eleanor would likely have used lard in place of Crisco (since lard was cheaper than butter in her day), and you may too, if you prefer. Yes, lard is still available on most grocery shelves, although I'm pretty sure I just felt you shudder!

This pie crust "freezes beautifully " as they say in *Steel Magnolias* (instructions on freezing below), so even though I may need only one pie crust at the moment, I always use this recipe and make a second, and freeze it for later. Makes that next pie (or savory custard) go twice as fast!

Ingredients for Eleanor's pie crust:

1 1/2 cups Crisco (or lard)
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg
5 tablespoons ice water
1 tablespoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon salt

In a large bowl, using a pastry cutter (or two knives will do the job), gradually work the Crisco into the flour for 3 to 4 minutes until it resembles coarse meal. In a smaller bowl, whip the egg and then pour it into the flour/shortening mixture. Add 5 tablespoons of ice-cold water, 1 tablespoon of white vinegar and 1 teaspoon of salt. Stir gently until all ingredients are blended well.

Halve the dough. Form the 2 evenly-sized balls of dough and place each into large sealable plastic bags. Using a rolling pin, slightly flatten each to about 1/2 inch thickness to make rolling easier later. Seal the bags and place them in the freezer until you need them. (If you're using the crusts immediately, it's still a good idea to let them chill in the freezer for about 15- 20 minutes. They'll be much easier to work with.)

When you're ready to roll the dough for your crust, remove from the freezer and allow to thaw for 15 minutes (if it's frozen). On a well-floured surface, roll the dough, starting at the center and working your way out. Sprinkle flour over the top of the dough if it's too moist. If the dough starts to stick to the countertop, use a metal spatula and gently scrape it up and flip it over and continue rolling until it's about 1/2 inch larger in diameter than your pie plate (or iron skillet).

Using a spatula, carefully lift the dough from the surface of the counter into the pie pan. (I sometimes fold my well-floured dough in half and then "unfold" it onto iron skillet. Or you can lop it over your rolling pin. That works well, too.) Gently press the dough against the sides of the pan or skillet, getting it all tucked in. Then crimp the edges in whatever way you prefer. And now, you're ready for that yummy savory custard filling above, or maybe for a fruit pie.

If you make this recipe (or if you've read *A Beauty So Rare*), I'd love to hear from you!