

Citrus Chiffon Pie

Have ready an ice bath made by partially filling a large bowl with cold water and ice cubes.

Pour the ¼ cup cold water into a saucepan and sprinkle with the gelatin. Let stand until the gelatin softens and swells, 5 to 10 minutes. Stir in the granulated sugar, salt, lemon juice, orange zest and egg yolks; the gelatin will be lumpy. Place the gelatin mixture over medium heat and cook, stirring continuously, until the gelatin melts and the mixture thickens, 6 to 8 minutes. Do not allow the mixture to boil. Set the saucepan in the ice bath and let cool until the mixture is cold to the touch.

In a large bowl, using an electric mixer on medium-high speed or a whisk, beat together the cream and confectioners' sugar until thick, soft peaks form. Spoon the whipped cream into the gelatin mixture and fold together with a rubber spatula until smooth. Pour into the cookie crust, smoothing the top with the spatula.

Refrigerate the pie until it is cold and firm, 3 to 4 hours. Let stand at room temperature for 20 minutes before serving to take the chill off. Makes one 9-inch pie; serves 8.

Note: This recipe contains eggs that may be only partially cooked. They run a risk of being infected with salmonella or other bacteria, which can lead to food poisoning. This risk is of most concern to small children, older people, pregnant women and anyone with a compromised immune system. If you have health and safety concerns, do not consume raw eggs.

To make eggs safe to consume, break them into a heatproof bowl and whisk to blend. Set the bowl over but not touching simmering water in a saucepan; the bowl should sit 1 inch above the water. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture reaches 140°F. Maintain the temperature of the mixture between 140° and 150°F for 5 minutes. (If it climbs above 150°F, remove from the heat.) Place the bowl over a bowl filled with ice water and stir the eggs with a spatula until cool. The eggs can then be used for the pie filling.

For the cookie crumb crust: Preheat an oven to 350°F. In a bowl, combine 1¼ cups gingersnap cookie crumbs, 5 Tbs. unsalted butter, melted, and 3 Tbs. granulated sugar. Stir until the crumbs are well moistened. Pat the mixture firmly and evenly into the bottom and all the way up the sides of a 9-inch pie pan or dish. Bake until the crust is firm, about 5 minutes. For a firmer, crunchier crust, bake for 5 minutes more. Makes one 9-inch crust.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Collection Series, *Pie & Tart*, by Carolyn Beth Weil (Simon & Schuster, 2003).

Ingredients for Citrus Chiffon Pie

- ¼ cup cold water
- 2¼ tsp. (1 package) unflavored powdered gelatin
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ⅞ tsp. salt
- ¾ cup fresh lemon juice, strained
- 1 Tbs. finely grated orange zest
- 4 egg yolks, lightly beaten
- 1¼ cups heavy cream
- ¼ cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 gingersnap cookie crumb crust (see below)

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Citrus Varieties

- Oranges
- Blood Oranges
- Mandarin Oranges
- Tangelos
- Grapefruits
- Pomelos
- Eureka Lemons
- Meyer Lemons
- Limes
- Kumquats

Segmenting Citrus

Recipes featuring citrus fruits often call for segments, or sections, to be cut away from the pith and membranes.



Using a sharp knife, cut a thick slice off the top and the bottom of the fruit, exposing the pulp.

Hold the fruit upright and slice off the peel in thick strips, cutting around the contours of the fruit.



Hold the peeled fruit over a bowl. Using the knife, carefully cut between the fruit and membrane on either side of each segment to free it, letting it drop into the bowl with the juices. Discard any seeds.

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Technique Class: Cooking with Citrus

During these cold winter months, when the juicy peaches and plump berries of summer are but a distant memory, this is the season to savor citrus. At their peak of flavor in winter, citrus fruits make a refreshing snack or dessert. The tangy juice and fragrant zest enliven both savory and sweet dishes, from salads and sauces to pies and cakes. It's just what you need to cure the winter blues.

Cooking with Citrus

All citrus fruits are acidic in varying degrees due primarily to the presence of citric acid. This acid packs a powerful punch. That's why a squirt of lemon juice goes a long way toward heightening the taste of foods—you're adding more than simply lemon flavor. The acid helps to offset the richness of meats and oils, cleansing the palate and adding a sprightly note to foods. For this reason, citrus is commonly used in Asian cuisines.

You'll discover countless ways to cook with citrus. Brighten vinaigrettes by substituting lemon, orange or other citrus juices for some or all of the vinegar. Add citrus juice to pan sauces for seafood, poultry and pork, infusing them with delicate flavor. (To preserve the fresh taste of the juice, stir it in near the end of cooking.) If a minestrone soup seems bland, squeeze in a bit of lemon juice to boost the flavor.

Try tossing broccoli, spinach, asparagus and other cooked vegetables with melted butter and a spritz of lemon; the acid balances the richness of the butter. A note of caution when combining citrus juices with cooked vegetables: The acid will eventually cause the food to discolor, and you'll wind up with broccoli in an unappetizing shade of dull green. To prevent this, serve the vegetables immediately, or use citrus zest instead of juice, which will add a fresh citrus flavor without causing discoloration.

Citrus juices are often blended into marinades. The acid helps tenderize meat by breaking down the proteins, causing them to unwind, or denature. This same action takes place with ceviche: Raw fish is marinated in citrus (usually lime) juice, which "cooks" the fish. Lemon juice also prevents cut foods like apples and pears from browning again, thanks to the acid.

Citrus zest—the colorful portion of the peel—is rich in essential oils that add a burst of flavor and aroma. Lemon zest, for example, is a key ingredient in lemon meringue pie and lemon soufflé. A strip of zest tossed in a slow-simmered stew or braised dish imparts a subtle citrus taste. The intensely flavored oils from the zest are also the source of essences, such as lemon oil and orange oil. These bottled oils are often used in baking. When zesting, only the outermost part of the rind should be removed; the white portion just underneath the skin, called the pith, tastes bitter.

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