

START OF SUMMER APRICOT PIE

INGREDIENTS

for the Crust

2 1/2 cups all purpose flour
1 tablespoon sugar
3/4 teaspoon salt
10 tablespoons (1 1/4 sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1/3 cup chilled solid vegetable shortening, diced
6 tablespoons (or more) ice water

for the Filling

1/2 cup sugar
2 tablespoons all purpose corn starch
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons lemon zest
3 pounds fresh apricots, pitted and diced

Optional

1/4 cup apricot jam
2 tablespoons lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

Blend flour, sugar and salt in processor. Add butter and shortening and cut in using on/off turns until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add 6 tablespoons ice water and process until moist clumps form, adding more water by teaspoonfuls if dough is dry. Gather into ball; divide into 2 pieces. Flatten each into disk. Wrap each in plastic; chill 2 hours.

Position rack in lowest third of oven and preheat to 400F. Mix together sugar, corn starch, lemon juice and lemon zest in a medium bowl. Add apricots and toss to blend.

Roll out 1 dough disk on floured surface to 12-inch round or a 5 x 13 inch rectangle. Transfer to 9-inch-diameter glass pie dish or on a 4 x 12 inch tart pan. Fold edge under, forming high-standing rim; crimp. Add filling. Roll out second dough disk on floured surface. Put top layer on pie and seal edges. Cut a few vent holes in the top. If you want to make the top decorative, use remaining dough and cookie cutters to cut and arrange on top of pie. Bake pie 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 375F. Continue baking until juices bubble thickly (you should see this through the vent holes) and crust is deep golden, covering edges with foil if browning too quickly, about 1 hour.

Mix together apricot jam and lemon juice until smooth. Using a pastry brush, glaze lightly over entire surface of pie (this will give it a nice sheen and additional flavor). Let pie cool 1 hour before cutting.