

## Pastry for Cream or Custard Pie

**Time:** Ten minutes in the food processor, plus an hour or more to chill.

Anson Mills Fine Cloth-bolted Pastry Flour can make a piecrust flaky without resorting to lard or vegetable shortening. Its “all butter” approach is better for browning, better for flavor and better for your health. Seriously.

### Equipment Mise en Place

To make the dough you will need a digital scale, a food processor, a fine tea strainer and a bench knife. You'll need a rolling pin to roll the dough out.

To bake the dough you will need a pizza stone, a standard nine-inch pie pan, aluminum foil, and about a quart of pie weights or dried beans for blind baking.

### Ingredients

*for the pastry*

6 ounces (about 1 1/3 cups) Anson Mills Fine Cloth-Bolted Pastry Flour

Scant 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

3 ounces (6 tablespoons) cold, unsalted European-style butter, cut into one inch cubes

1 large egg, beaten and strained through a fine tea strainer into a 2-cup glass measure (2 tablespoons)

3 tablespoons iced water

### Directions

**1.** Place the flour and salt in a food processor bowl and pulse to combine. Scatter the butter pieces over the surface and pulse to a coarse meal, about six 1-second pulses. Dump the contents of the processor onto a clean, dry counter. Scoop the mixture into a loose mound with your hands and make a well in the center of it. Add 2 tablespoons of ice water to the egg and combine lightly with a fork. Pour it into the well. Draw the liquid ingredients into the well with a fork, cupping the flour on the outside perimeter of the well with your spare hand. Then toss the dry and liquid ingredients together with your fingers and fluff lightly. With a bench knife drag the scraggly mass toward you on the counter. Use the heel of your hand on the dough and short, forward thrusts against the counter top to bring wet and dry ingredients together. Scrape together with a bench knife and repeat. Press firmly into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 30 minutes, up to 24 hours.

**2.** Roll the dough into a 15-inch round on a lightly floured surface and fit it into standard 9-inch pie pan. Trim and crimp the edges. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes.

### Baking Remarks

Anson Mills flours are “alive.” In the context of a pie dough—which contains liquid and fat—this means the pastry flour will begin to oxidize if the dough languishes unbaked in the refrigerator a day or two. You might see grayish streaks running across a disk of dough after 24 hours. These streaks do not affect the performance or flavor of the pastry—we tested it. Having said this, the best way to work with this recipe is to roll the pastry out and bake it the same day it is made. Or, freeze the dough, then defrost it, roll it out and bake it promptly.

Beaten egg in this recipe supplies resilience in the face of a moist filling.

Ah, the pizza stone. It's never far from our oven gates. In fact, we rarely remove it from the oven at all. To get a superior bottom crust on a pie--any pie, but particularly a pie whose filling begins as a liquid like custard or pumpkin--a pizza stone is essential. (If you don't own or use one, buy one. You will not regret it.) The crust needs to be blind-baked directly on the stone to become set before it's assaulted by liquid filling.

Moist fillings with eggs need

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Line the dough-lined pie pan with aluminum foil, giving it ample overhang. Pour a quart of dry beans or pie weights into the aluminum foil to come flush to the top of the crust. Bake as the recipe directs.

**Makes 1 9-inch piecrust**

gentle oven heat. This means the piecrust must be well baked—and browned—before the filling gets to it. It will brown very little once it's filled.