

buttermilk pie

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Buttermilk Pie

A pale, tangy custard pie, close kin to [chess pie](#) and to the English *whitepot* it descends from. Buttermilk is the whole flavour: acid enough to stop the sugar cloying, and thin enough that the filling stays light where a cream custard would be heavy.

It is a pantry pie. Nothing in it is seasonal and nothing in it is expensive.

What makes it work

- **Real cultured buttermilk.** The thin, sour liquid left from churning, or the cultured supermarket version. Milk soured with lemon juice is a poor substitute here because the flavour, not just the acid, is the point. See [buttermilk recipes](#).
- **Flour, not cornstarch.** Two tablespoons of flour gives a softer set with a faint body that suits the tang; cornstarch sets it too firm.
- **Nutmeg on top, generously.** Traditional and correct.
- **Low oven, wobbly centre,** like every custard pie in this folder.
- **Blind bake and seal the shell.**

Ingredients

One 23 cm pie. Serves 10.

- 1 blind-baked shell — [all-butter pie crust](#)
- 350 g granulated sugar
- 30 g all-purpose flour
- 115 g unsalted butter, melted
- 3 [eggs](#)
- 350 ml buttermilk
- 4 g fine salt
- 2 tsp vanilla — see [Pure vanilla extract](#)
- zest and 1 tbsp juice of 1 [lemon](#)
- [nutmeg](#), freshly grated

Method

Blind bake the shell. Set the oven to **165 °C / 325 °F**.

Whisk the sugar, flour and salt. Whisk in the melted butter, then the eggs one at a time, then the buttermilk, vanilla, zest and juice. Do not beat air in.

Pour into the shell, grate nutmeg thickly over the top, and bake **45–55 minutes**, until set at the edges with a 6 cm wobble in the middle.

Cool completely, then chill if you like — it is good both ways.

Notes

- **It browns unevenly and that is fine.** A slightly freckled top is what it looks like.
- Coconut buttermilk pie — 80 g of desiccated [coconut](#) folded in — is a common Texas variation.
- **Keeps four days refrigerated.**

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