

quiche lorraine

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Quiche Lorraine

Eggs, cream, bacon, in a pastry shell. The original from Lorraine had no cheese at all — *quiche* comes from the Alsatian *Kuchen*, and the dish is German border cooking rather than Parisian. Cheese arrived later and Gruyère is now usual, but the custard ratio is the part worth memorising.

What makes it work

- **The ratio: 1 egg to 120 ml of dairy.** Three eggs and 360 ml of cream and milk fills a 23 cm shell. More

egg gives a firm, rubbery set; more cream gives a custard that will not hold a slice.

- **Cream, or cream and milk. Not milk alone.** Fat is what makes it silky; a milk-only quiche sets tight and weeps.
- **Blind bake and seal the shell.** Non-negotiable for a wet savoury custard — see [all-butter pie crust](#).
- **Cook every filling ingredient first and drain it hard.** Raw onion, mushroom, spinach or tomato release water into the custard and it will not set. Squeeze spinach until it is genuinely dry.
- **Bake at 160 °C.** As with any custard, low and slow. Pull it with a wobble in the middle.
- **Deep is better than shallow.** A 4 cm deep quiche is a meal; a 2 cm one is a canapé.

Ingredients

One 23 cm deep tart tin. Serves 8.

- 1 blind-baked, egg-white-sealed shell — [all-butter pie crust](#)
- 250 g smoked bacon lardons or diced pancetta
- 1 onion, finely sliced, optional
- 3 [eggs](#) plus 2 yolks
- 250 ml double cream
- 150 ml whole [milk](#)
- 150 g Gruyère, grated — see [cheese](#)
- 4 g fine salt
- [nutmeg](#), grated
- black pepper

Method

Blind bake the shell, brush the inside with egg white, and return it for two minutes. Set the oven to **160 °C / 325 °F**.

Fry the lardons until the fat renders and they colour, then the onion in that fat until soft and dry, about ten minutes. Drain on kitchen paper and cool.

Whisk the eggs, yolks, cream, milk, salt, nutmeg and pepper. Do not aerate. Strain.

Scatter the bacon, onion and two-thirds of the cheese into the shell. Set the tart on the oven shelf and pour the custard in there. Scatter the rest of the cheese.

Bake **35–45 minutes**, until puffed at the edges and set with a slight wobble in the middle.

Cool 20 minutes before cutting. It is best warm, not hot.

Notes

- **Every other quiche is this one with the bacon swapped:** leek and goat's cheese, mushroom and thyme, smoked salmon and dill, caramelised onion. Cook and drain whatever goes in.
- **Keeps three days refrigerated.** Reheat at 150 °C for 15 minutes — a microwave makes the custard weep.
- The crustless version is a *frittata* by another name and needs no blind baking.

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