

strawberry rhubarb pie

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Strawberry Rhubarb Pie

The first pie of the year in a cold climate, because rhubarb is the first thing the garden produces — often in April, before any fruit at all. Strawberry is a later addition and a sensible one: rhubarb alone is punishing, and the berry brings sweetness and body.

Both are very wet, and rhubarb in particular disintegrates.

What makes it work

- **Macerate both, drain, reduce.** As with [peach pie](#), and even more so here. Rhubarb is 93% water.
- **Cut the rhubarb thick — 2 cm.** Thin slices dissolve completely and the filling becomes a purée. Thick pieces keep some shape.
- **Do not use the leaves.** Rhubarb leaves carry oxalic acid at toxic levels; only the stalk is food. See [Rhubarb](#).
- **Tapioca handles acid better than cornstarch** in a filling this sharp.
- **More sugar than feels right.** 250 g for a kilo of fruit. Rhubarb absorbs sweetness without ever tasting sweet.
- **A lattice**, so the very wet filling can reduce.

Ingredients

One 23 cm pie. Serves 8.

- 1 batch [all-butter pie crust](#)
- 600 g [rhubarb](#), cut in 2 cm pieces
- 500 g [strawberries](#), hulled and halved
- 250 g granulated sugar
- 40 g tapioca starch, or 35 g [cornstarch](#)
- 4 g fine salt
- zest of 1 orange
- 1 tsp vanilla — see [Pure vanilla extract](#)
- 20 g unsalted butter
- 1 [egg](#) beaten with 1 tbsp [milk](#)
- coarse sugar

Method

Toss the rhubarb and strawberries with the sugar, salt and zest. Leave one hour — it will pool badly.

Drain into a pan and reduce the liquid to about 80 ml. Cool, then return it to the fruit with the starch and vanilla.

Line the tin and chill; cut lattice strips.

Heat the oven to **220 °C / 425 °F** with a heavy tray inside.

Fill, dot with butter, lattice, chill 20 minutes, glaze and sugar.

Bake **20 minutes** at 220 °C, then **190 °C / 375 °F for 45–55 minutes**, until bubbling thickly in the centre.

Cool at least four hours.

Notes

- **Forced rhubarb**, grown in the dark, is pink, tender and much milder; field rhubarb is green, sour and better in a pie.
- Rhubarb freezes perfectly. Cut, spread on a tray, freeze, bag — and use it frozen with 15 minutes

added.

- **Keeps two days** at room temperature. The crust softens fast under this filling.

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