

MOM'S CHERRY PIE RECIPE

The key to a proper cherry pie is using tart pie cherries like Montmorency cherries.

MOM'S PERFECT CHERRY PIE FILLING

4 1/2 cups fresh pitted tart pie cherries
2/3-1 cup sugar, depending on taste
1/4 cup cornstarch
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon almond extract

Mix ingredients in a bowl and set aside while you make the pie crust. If you have to use canned pie cherries, make sure they're water packed. I've read you need to cook filling made of canned cherries on the stove first, but I've never tried it and it certainly wasn't part of my mom's approach, so you're on your own for canned.

MOM'S PIE CRUST

2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
2/3 cups shortening (my mom was adamant—Crisco or don't bother!)
4-6 tablespoons cold water

Sift flour and salt. Cut in shortening. (Mom always used two table knives.) Add water a tablespoon at a time and gently mix with a fork until dough holds together. Divide, roll out, and follow directions for whatever pie you're making. Makes 2 9" shells or 1 9" double-crust pie.

CHERRY PIE: Heat oven to 400F. Line 9" pie pan with bottom crust. Fill with cherry filling. Top with second crust, trim excess, then crimp edges together. If you're feeling clever, try a lattice top crust. It's prettier, but a tiny bit more work. If you use a full top crust, prick crust to let steam out during cooking.

Place pie on a large baking sheet (to catch any juice that might spill over during cooking) and bake at 400F for 20 minutes. Leave the pie in the oven, lower temperature to 375F, and bake for another 30 to 35 minutes. If the edges of the crust are browning too quickly, place a pie crust shield or circle of foil over the crust to finish cooking. When time is up, remove pie from oven and set aside to cool for 3-4 hours minimum—the filling needs time to firm. Enjoy!

