

Mince Pie with Hard Sauce

Ingredients:

Pastry dough for 2-crust pie
1 jar (28 ounces) ready-to-use mincemeat
1 large cooking apple, peeled and finely chopped
1 cup walnuts (4 ounces), coarsely broken
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
2 tablespoons brandy or rum (optional)
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Hard sauce

Directions:

Prepare pastry dough. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a medium bowl, stir together the mincemeat, apple, walnuts, brown sugar, brandy, and lemon juice until well combined.

Spoon the mincemeat filling into a pastry lined pie plate. Roll out remaining disk of dough. Place dough over filling and make a decorative edge. Cut slits (1-inch) on top center of the pastry. (Optional: brush beaten egg on pastry to give the pie a glossy sheen.) Bake until golden, 30 to 40 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour to serve warm or cool completely to serve later. Serve with hard sauce. Makes 10 servings.

Ingredients for Hard Sauce:

1 cup butter (2 sticks), softened (do not use margarine)
2 cups confectioners' (also known as powdered) sugar
1/4 cup brandy
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions for Hard Sauce:

In a small bowl, with mixer at medium speed, beat the butter until creamy. Reduce speed to low and gradually beat in confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the brandy and vanilla. Serve or transfer to airtight containers and refrigerate up to 1 month. Let stand at room temperature until soft enough to spread, about 30 minutes. Makes about 2 cups.