

Strawberry Rhubarb Pie, hint of Rose Water

a recipe from www.maureenabood.com

The amount of fruit for the filling need not be exact. But it's always better, I find, to err on the side of a bit more fruit than a bit less, for a full pie plate. I tend to use nearly the same amount of fruit for both a 9" and a 10" pie (it's a very full 9-inch, and a nicely full 10-inch). The tapioca is an ideal filling thickener, but be sure to use the "quick cooking" variety rather than "small pearl" which won't cook as readily. This pie is easily made vegan by leaving out the dotted butter and the milk. Makes one 9- or 10-inch pie.

For My Mom's Best Crust:

For 9" double crust pie:

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups unbleached, all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 1 teaspoon vegetable, canola, or other neutral oil
4 tablespoons ice water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk (of any sort)

For 10" double crust pie:

2 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups unbleached, all-purpose flour
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 1-2 teaspoons vegetable, canola or other neutral oil
5 tablespoons ice water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk (of any sort)

For the filling:

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups strawberries, hulled and coarsely chopped
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups rhubarb, cut in $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces
1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups sugar
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup quick-cooking tapioca (dry/uncooked)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 teaspoon rose water (optional)
1 recipe of my mom's best pie crust (9" or 10")
2 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces (optional)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk, also noted in the pie crust recipe and just a reminder here, to glaze the pie

Place the rack in the middle of the oven with another rack below. Place a large sheet of foil on the lower rack to catch drips. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

In a large bowl, combine the strawberries, rhubarb, sugar, tapioca, and rose water if using. The amount of rose water you add here depends on how strong yours is in flavor; a light touch is best, so start with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon and if a light fragrance of rose is present with the fruit, that's enough.

Prepare the pie crust as described in detail in the crust recipe. To summarize, in a medium bowl, whisk the flour and salt, stir in the oil, then add the water. Add an additional teaspoon of oil if the dough seems at all dry. On a damp work surface, roll out half of the dough between two sheets of waxed paper to a circle 2 inches larger than the pie plate, remove top sheet of paper and invert over the pie plate. Ease the dough down into the plate. After trimming the bottom layer and before rolling out the top layer, pour the sugared fruit into the bottom crust in the plate. Dot the top of the pie with butter.

Roll out the top layer between two fresh sheets of waxed paper on a damp work surface, to a circle 1 inch larger than the pie plate. Remove the top sheet of paper and invert over the pie. Leaving a 1/2-1 inch overhang, trim, tuck the overhang under the bottom layer, and crimp. Cut vents decoratively in the top. Rub or brush the entire top of the pie with milk. Cover the edges of the pie with a pie guard or pieces of foil, crumpling it well so it stays in place. The foil is not a perfect science; just get it to cover as much of the edge as possible.

Bake for 40-50 minutes, removing the foil for the last 15 minutes of baking so the edges brown up. When the fruit can be seen bubbling up vigorously in the vents and the crust is golden brown, the pie is ready. Remove from the oven and cool; the filling will firm up some as the pie cools. Serve lukewarm or at room temperature. The pie will keep on the kitchen counter for a couple of days, loosely covered with waxed paper or foil.