

Pie

## Triple-Chocolate Pudding Pie with Cappuccino Cream

Chill the pie for at least 6 hours before serving or make it up to 2 days ahead.

NOTE: Pie can be frozen and then thawed out and served. It retains its original flavor and consistency very well.

### CRUST

9 whole chocolate graham crackers

1 tablespoon sugar

pinch of salt

6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

### FILLING

1 1/4 cups sugar

1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (I used Ghirardelli's, which is much darker than other brands I've seen.)

1/4 cup cornstarch

3 1/2 cups half and half

4 large egg yolks

3 1/2 ounces bittersweet (not unsweetened) or semisweet chocolate, chopped (Again, I used Ghirardelli's chocolate. I used half bittersweet and half semisweet and used slightly more than the

recipe calls for.)

3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped (I used Bakers'.)

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 teaspoon vanilla extract (I always put at least twice the amount of vanilla called for.)

#### TOPPING

1 cup chilled whipped cream

2 tablespoons powdered sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons instant espresso powder (I went to Starbuck's and bought from them a package of the coffee powder they use in their Frappaccino drinks. Because I thought it likely that this was stronger than what the recipe calls for, I put it in a bit at a time until it tasted how I wanted.)

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract (Again, I always put in at least twice the amount of vanilla called for.)

#### CHOCOLATE-COVERED ESPRESSO BEANS

Directions for crust: Preheat oven to 350°F. Finely grind graham crackers, sugar, and salt in processor. Add butter and blend to moisten crumbs. Firmly press mixture into 9-inch-diameter glass pie dish. Bake until crust sets, about 8 minutes. Cool.

Directions for filling:

Whisk sugar, cocoa, and cornstarch in heavy medium saucepan. Gradually whisk in 1 cup half and half. Whisk in remaining 2 1/2 cups half and half and yolks. Whisk over medium-high heat until

mixture thickens and boils, whisking constantly, about 12 minutes. Remove from heat. Add both chocolates and butter; whisk until melted and smooth. Mix in vanilla. Transfer filling to crust. Press plastic wrap directly onto surface of filling and chill until filling sets, at least 6 hours. (Can be made 2 days ahead. Keep chilled.)

Directions for topping:

Beat all ingredients in large bowl until peaks form. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Re-whisk to thicken before serving, if necessary.) Peel plastic off pie. Cut pie into wedges. Spoon dollop of cream atop each slice. Garnish with chocolate-covered espresso beans and serve.

MARKET TIP: chocolate-covered espresso beans are sold at specialty foods stores, cookware stores, and coffee bars.