

Italian Easter Rice Pie



What You'll Need:

Crust, makes 4 pies:

5 cups flour

5 tsp baking powder

1 cup sugar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup crisco or cold unsalted butter

5 eggs

5 tablespoons milk

Base Filling, makes 4 pies:

1 cup uncooked long grain white rice

3 lbs ricotta cheese

12 eggs

2 cups sugar

Citrus Cinnamon Filling, enough for one pie:

Zest of one lemon

Zest of one orange

$\frac{1}{8}$ cup orange juice

$\frac{1}{8}$ cup lemon juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon

Cherry Vanilla Filling, enough for one pie:

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped maraschino cherries

1 teaspoon vanilla

Pineapple Filling, enough for one pie:

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ricotta

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup strained crushed pineapple

Chocolate Filling, enough for one pie:

Chopped chocolate, I prefer semisweet or dark.

What You'll Do:

1. Before we get started, I have to explain to you why this recipe makes 4 pies. I know that sounds insane, but this is the Italian-American way. Why would you make one pie, when you can make FOUR? Recipes like this one are meant for holidays, gatherings and, most importantly, sharing. Large gatherings have been on a pause for the last year (but hopefully for not too much longer!), but that doesn't mean we can't still share our creations with friends and family by dropping it off to them to eat! Food is one of the best acts of love there is.
2. Let's get going on these pies because we have work to do. First, we are going to make our base filling and pie crust dough. These both make enough for four pies. You can then take the base filling and flavor it in four different directions, all of which are common variations of the classic Italian Easter Rice Pie. I like to make one of each, cut each pie into quarters, and then assemble four pie plates each with one quarter of a different pie. It's absolutely extra AF and the perfect way to gift this pie.
3. Let's get started with the base filling. Measure 1 cup of uncooked rice. Cook the rice fully based on the instructions on the bag. Once cooked, set aside and let cool.
4. While the rice cools, make the pie crust. I use a stand mixer here, but you can totally mix by hand. To the bowl of the stand mixer, add five cups flour and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shortening (I use Crisco) and mix until little pearls of shortening form. Add 5 teaspoons of baking powder and 1 cup sugar and combine. Now, add five eggs and five tablespoons milk and combine. Use your hands to bring dough fully together into a ball. Add flour to a clean, smooth surface. Press ball of dough into a disk then cut the disk into four equal pieces. If you want, you can freeze a few pieces of dough at this point for later. Just wrap them up tightly and place them in the freezer.
5. Grab your four pie plates (you can get a pack of reusable aluminum ones at any grocery store. They're great, especially for gifting pies.) and a rolling pin. HOT TIP: A flat-sided wine bottle makes a great rolling pin in a pinch! Place $\frac{1}{4}$ of your dough on your floured surface and begin to roll it out, alternate your rolling to make a disk that's bigger than your pie plate. Roll your crust back onto your rolling pin, then unroll it over your pie plate so it lands in the right spot, covering the entire plate with some overhang. Press any ripped edges and fix broken pieces, and don't stress over them! Grab a knife to do a simple cut around the rim of the pie plate for a clean edge. If you want to show off and do some fancy crust edges, by all means please do! I keep it simple. Repeat this process with all four pie plates and set them aside.
6. This is a good time to preheat your oven to 350°.
7. Let's check on that cooled rice. Grab a BIG bowl and add cooked rice, 3 lbs of ricotta cheese, a dozen blended or whisked eggs and 2 cups of sugar. Mix to combine.

8. At this point, you decide what flavor pies you want to make, and then divide your base filling into as many bowls as there are flavors. The following are the most common flavor options for Easter Rice Pie as well as enough ingredients to make one pie of each flavor. Multiply the ingredients by as many pies as you want to make in that flavor and follow directions accordingly.
9. Citrus Cinnamon Filling, enough for one pie: Add all ingredients into base filling and mix. Pour filling into pie crust.
10. Cherry Vanilla Filling, enough for one pie: Add all ingredients into base filling and mix. Pour filling into pie crust.
11. Pineapple Filling, enough for one pie: Add pineapple into base filling and mix. Pour filling into pie crust.
12. Chocolate Filling, enough for one pie: Pour base filling into pie crust, then sprinkle chopped chocolate on top of filling. ***Do not stir or mix.***
13. Now all of your pies are ready to be baked! Bake them at 350° for one hour. Two pies on the top rack and two pies on the bottom. 30 minutes into baking, swap the pie positions so they bake evenly!
14. Once pies are done baking, let them cool. Storage happens in the fridge and this pie is eaten room temp or chilled.
15. If you are sharing your pies, consider assembling pie plate samplers with one quarter of each flavor. It's such a fun and delicious way to share!
16. I hope you love this recipe as much as I do! Enjoy.