

Mango-Coconut or Chocolate Pie

Vegan, Gluten-Free + Mostly Raw

This recipe is based on a creative process. Never have I once made it exactly the same way, and I encourage you to do the same! The instructions might appear long and detailed, but the reality is that this pie is fairly easy to make and takes far less time than to bake one. I've tried to include as many detailed instructions as possible because although it is easy to prepare, the steps are quite specific and might include some forethought or pre-preparation.

For the filling of the pie, you will need one of two base ingredients, either raw cashews and/or canned coconut milk. These will both vary the flavor and texture. For the cashews it is best if you have a high-power blender, such as a Vitamix, and you will need to plan in advance because the cashews must be soaked for at least 1-4 hours, or even all day if you can remember to do so. The longer they soak, the easier it will be to blend them into a smooth and creamy mixture.

Then you need something that will help set the filling. I find coconut butter to work the best, but it is pricey. Tapioca starch works pretty well if you're using only canned coconut however the pie will need to remain chilled or the consistency will be closer to pudding. Overall I haven't had as much luck with natural thickeners (such as agar) as opposed to adding a *denser* ingredient like the coconut butter.



If you want to try a **chocolate version** without the fruit, you won't need anything else to make it set! Just melt half a bag of dark chocolate chips and add to the blender. You'll want to add extra sweetener because you won't have the natural sweetness of the fruit.

(It's been a long time since I made one of these and could now do a superior job with that marbleizing effect!)

INGREDIENTS

CRUST

1.5 – 2 cups nuts.

- Amount dependant on pan size. I used approximately 2 cups for a 9" spring-form pan with crust going on the sides. A smaller pie pan or tart pan would take less.

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- Almonds, walnuts and hazelnuts are best, and can be mixed together. Macadamia and cashew nuts also work well and are generally less expensive. Different nuts will vary favor, texture, and how much water you need to add to the crust.

3-4 Medjool dates (again, dependant on size of pan)

Splash of water (start with less!)

OPTIONAL: Parchment paper for lining the pan, especially if you're using spring-form

FILLING

1-2 cans of coconut milk, solids only (1 for a smaller pie)

- Can should have been sitting for a while or left in the fridge (not rolling around in your shopping cart) so that the solids can be scooped off the top and the liquid can be left on the bottom. Save liquid for something else, such as smoothies!

2-3 Champagne mangoes, or 1-2 larger mango (less mango for a smaller pie)

¼ cup (or more!) coconut butter **OR** 2-3 tablespoons tapioca starch. The more cocoa butter you use, the firmer the pie results.

Maple syrup to TASTE! Maybe 2 tablespoons

1-tsp vanilla

½ - 1 tsp cardamom (to taste, more or less depending on how fresh it is)

1 lemon's worth of zest and/or other citrus fruit.

- USE MORE if not using zest on top for flavor and decoration.

DECORATION

Attractive fruit of your choice

- I usually base this on whatever looks good/is affordable. You can fill the whole pie or leave space in the center. If you're not used to the delicate slicing of fruit get EXTRA in case you mess up, or to make sure all of your slices are the same diameter.

DIRECTIONS

CRUST

Toast nuts until browned (not burned!!!) either in toaster oven (where you can keep an eye on them) or in the oven. WATCH THEM or they will burn. Best to toast different kinds of nuts separately. Cool

nuts (or *not* if you're impatient like me) and pulse in food processor a few times. DO NOT fully process. Add dates and pulse until combined into a *coarse* meal. Add water a LITTLE splash at a time. It does not take much to bring the mixture together. Macadamia and cashew will take LESS water. Mixture should still be semi-crumby, but soft and malleable, holding its shape when you press into it.

If using parchment paper, line the bottom of the pan, and if using a spring-form pan also line the sides. Press mixture into pan and mold along the edges. I use a spoon to trim, smooth, and even out the top edges. Then I press and slide it along the inside corner to round it out, which makes a nice supportive side. If using a spring-form pan, you want your sides strong enough to stand upright.

FILLING

If you have a Vitamix or other serious blender, then you're all set. If you have only a food processor, mixture will possibly be less smooth.

If using cashews, drain and add to blender. Add coconut milk, scooping off SOLIDS and leaving behind approximately half a can of liquid. Add mango (peel removed and sliced off the pit). Blend on low/medium. Soften coconut butter add to filling mixture, and blend on high until it is as SMOOTH and CREAMY as possible.

Add maple syrup to taste, vanilla, and cardamom (also to taste). Pour filling over crust and bang pan a little and then use a spatula to smooth it all out.

Depending on how firm this is, you can either decorate immediately, or let it set for a little bit which you might need to do if omitting coconut butter and using a different kind of thickener.

DECORTION

Use lots of citrus zest, even underneath layers of fruit. I used zest of lemon, lime, and blood orange. Use thin slices of fruits of choice. I used blood orange and kiwi.

LET SET

Overnight best for setting the pie, or *at least* a few hours in the fridge.