



## EASY AS PIE

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This time of year, life can get exceptionally hectic. This menu is designed as BYOP in mind (Bring-Your-Own-Pie), so you can plan and make ahead during the busy holiday season.



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### PRE-PIES

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Asparagus and Tomato Tart  
Caramelized Pear and Gruyere Torta  
Onion Tartlets

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### ACCOMPANYING PIES

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Layered Salad  
Winter Squash Galette

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### PIZZA PIES

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Truffled Taleggio and Mushroom Pizza  
Sausage, Red Onion, and Wild Mushroom Pizza  
Duck Pizza with Hoisin and Scallions

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### SAVORY PIES

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Cheddar-Topped Shepherd's Pie  
Baked Kibbeh  
Lobster Pot Pie

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### SWEET PIES

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Coffee Buttercrunch Pie with Shaved Chocolate  
Pecan Pie Bars  
Caramel Pear Cheesecake Trifle

## PRE-PIES

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### ASPARAGUS AND TOMATO TART

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1 (9-inch) frozen pie crust  
2 slices bacon, chopped  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 bunch fresh asparagus tips, reserve stems for Round 2 Recipe  
1/2 cup ricotta cheese  
1/4 cup milk  
2 eggs, lightly beaten  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley leaves  
1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained well, divided  
1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more for seasoning  
1/4 freshly ground black pepper, plus more for seasoning  
1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh basil leaves  
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

Place the frozen pie crust onto a baking sheet. Prick the bottom of the crust with a fork and bake for 10 minutes.

Saute the bacon in a skillet over medium heat until crisp. Remove bacon and drain on a paper towel. Add onion and asparagus tips to the skillet with the bacon fat and saute until tender, approximately 5 minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk together ricotta, milk and eggs. Add parsley, half the tomatoes and season with salt and pepper. Add asparagus and onion mixture and combine well. Pour egg mixture into the prepared crust.

Bake in the preheated oven for 40 to 45 minutes or until filling has set and the tart is lightly browned on top. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

In a small bowl, toss the remaining tomatoes with the basil, balsamic vinegar and season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Serve as garnish for tart.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/sandra-lee/asparagus-and-tomato-tart-recipe/index.html>

### CARAMELIZED PEAR AND GRUYERE TORTA

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2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
4 Bosc pears, chopped  
4 – 8 ounce packages Neufchatel cheese, softened  
2 cups grated Gruyere cheese  
1 cup chopped pistachio nuts

In a large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Stir in sugar and pears until well combined. Cook for 12 to 15 minutes until liquid thickens and pears begin to caramelize. Remove from heat; set aside and cool completely.

In a bowl of electric mixer, combine Neufchatel cheese and Gruyere cheese. Beat at medium speed until well combined and fluffy.

Line an 8-inch round cake pan with plastic wrap. Spread half of cheese mixture in bottom of pan. Spread half of pear mixture in pan; top with remaining cheese mixture; refrigerate for 1 hour. (We will put in freezer to speed up the process).

Invert onto serving dish, and remove from pan. Carefully remove plastic wrap. Cover sides of torta with chopped pistachio nuts; top with remaining pears. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve with good crackers.

<http://www.trufflesandtrifles.com/recipeshow.aspx?NewsID=614>

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## CARAMELIZED-ONION TARTLETS

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- 2 cups very thinly sliced onion (about 2 onions)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 (9-inch) refrigerated pie shell (from a 15-ounce package)
- 3 tablespoons crème fraîche at room temperature
- 1 1/2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh chives



Special equipment: a 2 1/4-inch round cookie cutter; a mini-muffin pan with 12 (1/8-cup) muffin cups

Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 375°F.

Cook onion, butter, water, salt, and pepper, covered, in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderately low heat, 10 minutes. Remove lid and cook, stirring frequently, until onion is deep golden brown and very tender, about 25 minutes.

While onion cooks, roll out dough to slightly less than 1/8 inch thick. Cut out 12 rounds with cutter and lightly press each into a mini-muffin cup. Bake until pale golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove tartlet shells from muffin

pan.

Stir together crème fraîche and chives and divide among shells, then top with caramelized onions.

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/printerfriendly/Caramelized-Onion-Tartlets-230744#ixzz2DHY19DvG>

## ACCOMPANYING PIES

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### LAYERED SALAD

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#### SALAD:

2 heads Iceberg Lettuce, Chopped  
8 ounces, fluid Baby Spinach, Washed And Dried  
Salt And Pepper, to taste  
8 whole Hard Boiled Eggs, Chopped  
16 ounces, weight Bacon, Cooked And Chopped  
4 whole Tomatoes, Chopped  
1 bunch Green Onions, Thinly Sliced  
8 ounces, weight Cheddar Cheese, Grated  
1 bag (10 Ounce) Frozen Peas, Partially Thawed

#### DRESSING:

1/2 cup (Real) Mayonnaise  
1/2 cup Sour Cream  
1 Tablespoon Sugar (more To Taste)  
Fresh Dill, Chopped

In a clear glass bowl, layer salad ingredients in the order they appear above, concentrating ingredients around the perimeter of the bowl and filling in the center with lettuce, if needed. End with the layer of peas.

Combine dressing ingredients in a separate bowl and mix well. Pour over the top of the peas and spread to cover, bringing dressing all the way out to the edges of the bowl. Sprinkle with fresh dill. Cover and refrigerate for up to 8 hours. Toss just before serving.

<http://thepioneerwoman.com/cooking/2010/08/layered-salad/>

### WINTER SQUASH GALLETTE

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Yeasted Tart Dough with Olive Oil (see below)  
2 1/2 pounds winter squash, such as butternut  
1 small head garlic, cloves separated but not peeled  
1 tablespoon olive oil, plus extra for the squash  
1 onion, finely diced  
12 fresh sage leaves, chopped, or 2 teaspoons dried  
1/2 cup freshly grated pecorino or Parmesan  
Salt and freshly milled pepper  
1 egg, beaten

#### Yeasted Tart Dough with Olive Oil:

2 teaspoons active dry yeast

1/2 teaspoon sugar  
1/2 cup warm water  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
1 egg, lightly beaten  
3/8 teaspoon salt  
1 3/4 cups flour, as needed

#### Instructions

1. Make the dough. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Cut the squash in half, scrape out the seeds, and brush the cut surface with oil. Stuff the garlic into the cavities and place the squash cut side down on a sheet pan. Bake until the flesh is tender, about 40 minutes. Scoop out the squash and squeeze the garlic cloves. Mash them together with a fork until fairly smooth, leaving some texture.
2. Warm 1 tablespoon oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and sage and cook until the onion is soft and beginning to color, about 12 minutes. Add it to the squash along with the grated cheese and season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Roll out the dough into a 14-inch circle and spread the filling over it, leaving a border of 2 inches or more. Pleat the dough over the filling, then brush the edges with beaten egg. Bake until the crust is golden, about 25 minutes.

#### Yeasted Tart Dough with Olive Oil

Makes one 9-, 10-, or 11-inch tart, pie or galette, 6 to 8 individual shells

1. The egg contributes to the strength and suppleness of the dough. If you don't eat eggs, leave it out and add an additional 3 tablespoons water with 1 tablespoon oil.
2. Dissolve the yeast and sugar in the water in a medium bowl and let stand until bubbly, about 10 minutes.
3. Add the oil, egg, and salt, then stir in the flour. When the dough is too stiff to work with a spoon, turn it onto the counter and knead until smooth and elastic, about 4 minutes.
4. Add more flour if necessary to keep it from sticking. Set the dough in an oiled bowl, turn it over to coat, cover with a towel, and let rise until doubled in bulk, 45 minutes to an hour.
5. Turn the dough out. Roll it into a thin circle and use it to line a tart or pie pan or to make a free-form galette.

Note: For individual tarts, divide it into 6 pieces, shape into balls, and let rest under a towel for 15 minutes before rolling them out.

<http://www.splendidtable.org/recipes/winter-squash-galette>

## PIZZA PIES

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### TRUFFLED TALEGGIO AND MUSHROOM PIZZA

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Four ingredients and a few minutes are all it takes to put together this crisp, bubbly masterpiece. A quick drizzle of truffle oil adds a final flourish of decadence.

1 pound pizza dough, thawed if frozen  
1/2 pound sliced mushrooms  
3/4 pound cold Taleggio or Italian Fontina, rind discarded and cheese sliced  
1 teaspoon white truffle oil (optional)

Put a large heavy baking sheet (17 by 14 inches) on lowest rack of oven, then preheat oven to 500°F.

Stretch out dough on a lightly floured surface, pulling on corners to form a roughly 16- by 13-inch rectangle. Transfer to a tray lined with parchment paper. Lightly prick dough all over with a fork. Slide dough (still on parchment) onto hot baking sheet. Bake until top is puffed and pale golden in patches, 6 to 10 minutes.

Remove from oven; prick any large bubbles with a fork and flatten. Scatter mushrooms over crust, then season with salt and pepper and lay cheese on top.

Bake pizza until edge of crust is deep golden and cheese is bubbling and golden in patches, 8 to 10 minutes. Drizzle with truffle oil (if using) and season with pepper. Serve immediately.

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/printerfriendly/Truffled-Taleggio-and-Mushroom-Pizza-241997#ixzz2DHZCBHRt>

### SAUSAGE, RED ONION, AND WILD MUSHROOM PIZZA

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Fresh pizza dough is now available at some supermarkets; look for it in the refrigerated deli case or use thin Boboli crusts.

Piave is similar to, but a bit creamier than, Parmigiano-Reggiano. Look for it at Italian markets and specialty cheese stores.

Yield: Makes 2 pizzas

1 16-ounce ball purchased fresh pizza dough  
2/3 cup finely grated Piave or Parmesan cheese  
2 1/4 teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary, divided  
1/2 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper  
Coarse kosher salt

1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, divided  
2 1/2 hot Italian sausages, casings removed  
1 small red onion, thinly sliced  
7 ounces fresh wild mushrooms (such as stemmed shiitake, oyster, and chanterelle), thickly sliced



1 3/4 cups coarsely grated whole-milk mozzarella cheese (about 7 ounces), divided

Chopped fresh parsley (optional)

Position 1 rack in top third and 1 rack in bottom third of oven and preheat to 450°F. Lightly flour 2 baking sheets. Place dough on work surface; let stand until room temperature, about 20 minutes. Divide dough in half. Press and stretch each piece out on lightly floured surface to 5-inch round. Sprinkle each with 1/3 cup Piave cheese, 3/4 teaspoon rosemary, and 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper; sprinkle with coarse salt. Roll each piece of dough out to 10-inch round, pressing in seasonings. Transfer dough rounds to prepared baking sheets.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add sausage. Sauté until brown, breaking into 1/2-inch pieces with back of spoon, about 5 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer sausage to bowl. Add onion to skillet. Sauté until crisp-tender, about 2 minutes; transfer to plate. Add remaining 1/2 tablespoon oil to skillet. Add mushrooms and remaining 3/4 teaspoon rosemary; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté until brown, about 5 minutes. Leaving 1/2-inch plain border, top each dough round with 3/4 cup mozzarella, then onion, sausage, and mushrooms. Bake until crust bottoms are crisp and brown, reversing sheets after 10 minutes, about 20 minutes total. Using large spatula, transfer pizzas to work surface. Sprinkle each with 2 tablespoons mozzarella, then parsley, if desired.

Test-kitchen tip:

Pizza-wheel cutters can drag toppings, so use a large chef's knife to cut pizzas into wedges.

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/printerfriendly/Sausage-Red-Onion-and-Wild-Mushroom-Pizza-231717#ixzz2DHZU99Ad>

## DUCK PIZZA WITH HOISIN AND SCALLIONS

Get your fix of two favorites (Chinese and pizza) in one crusty canapé—for fewer than 150 calories.

1 duck (or chicken) breast, fat trimmed  
1/2 teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
1 teaspoon olive oil  
1/2 pound whole-wheat pizza dough  
3 tablespoons hoisin sauce  
1 cup baby spinach, chopped  
1/2 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella  
1/2 red bell pepper, cored, seeded and diced  
4 scallions, thinly sliced  
2 tablespoons black sesame seeds



Heat oven to 400°F. Sprinkle duck with five-spice powder, salt and pepper. Heat oil in a medium skillet over high heat. Cook duck until browned, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer skillet to oven;

bake duck until outside is cooked but inside is rare, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool 4 to 5 minutes. Thinly slice on the diagonal into 8 pieces, then cut each in half. Set aside. Form dough into 8 even balls, then flatten to form 3-inch disks and place on an ungreased baking sheet. Spread hoisin sauce on crusts with a pastry brush. Top with spinach, cheese, bell pepper and duck. Bake until cheese is melted and bubbly, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove and garnish with scallions and sesame seeds.

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/printerfriendly/Duck-Pizza-with-Hoisin-and-Scallions-356569#ixzz2DHYxk5AH>

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## SAVORY PIES

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### CHEDDAR-TOPPED SHEPHERD'S PIE

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Old-style pubs have it right: Sitting down to a generous helping of shepherd's pie is a true pleasure; making it is happily simple. We've added sharp cheddar to our mashed potatoes for a snappy topping.

2 pounds baking potatoes (about 4), peeled and thinly sliced  
Coarse salt and ground pepper  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil, such as safflower  
6 medium carrots, halved lengthwise, quartered if large, and thinly sliced  
6 celery stalks, thinly sliced  
1 large onion, chopped  
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme  
1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
1/4 cup tomato paste  
2 pounds ground beef chuck  
1 cup whole milk  
1 1/2 cups shredded sharp white cheddar (6 ounces)



Preheat oven to 450. Place potatoes in a large saucepan, and cover by 1 inch with salted water. Bring to a boil; reduce to a simmer. Cook until potatoes are easily pierced with the tip of a paring knife, 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a 5-quart Dutch oven or heavy pot over medium-high. Add carrots, celery, onion, and thyme. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Add flour and tomato paste; cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add beef; cook, stirring occasionally, until no longer pink, 6 to 8 minutes. Add 1 cup water; bring to a boil, and simmer 1 minute. Set beef filling aside. Drain potatoes; return to pan. Cook over medium, stirring, until liquid has evaporated and a thin film covers bottom of pan, about 1 minute. Remove pan from heat; add milk and 1 cup cheese. Mash until smooth; season cheddar-potato topping with salt and pepper.

Pour beef filling into a 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Drop dollops of topping over filling; spread to edges with a spatula. Using a fork, make decorative peaks; sprinkle with remaining 1/2 cup cheese. Bake until topping is browned and filling is bubbling rapidly, about 20 minutes (if topping and filling were chilled, increase to 35 minutes). Let stand 5 minutes before serving.



### Cook's Note

Both filling and topping can be made up to a day ahead and refrigerated separately.

<http://www.marthastewart.com/319350/cheddar-topped-shepherds-pie>

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## KIBBEH WITH YOGURT DIPPING SAUCE

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Swap lean ground beef for the lamb if desired.\*

1 cup(s) plain, low fat, Greek yogurt  
1/2 medium English cucumber(s), diced  
1/4 cup(s) fresh parsley, and/or mint, fresh, minced  
2 clove(s) (medium) garlic clove(s), minced, or to taste  
1 tsp olive oil  
1 fl oz fresh lemon juice, or to taste  
1/2 tsp table salt, or to taste  
1/8 tsp black pepper, freshly ground, or to taste

### Kibbeh

1/2 cup(s) uncooked bulgur  
2 cup(s) uncooked onion(s), Spanish, diced  
1 cup(s) fresh parsley, and/or mint, fresh, packed  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground allspice  
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon  
1 tsp table salt  
1/2 tsp black pepper  
1 pound(s) lean ground lamb  
4 spray(s) cooking spray  
1 Tbsp olive oil, divided  
1 medium lemon(s), cut into 8 wedges

\*To make yogurt sauce, combine first 8 ingredients in a bowl; refrigerate for 1 hour.

To make kibbeh, place bulgur in a glass bowl and add just enough water to cover it; microwave on high until water is absorbed, about 1 to 2 minutes. Fluff bulgur with a fork and allow to cool.

Meanwhile, using a food processor, process onions and parsley (or mint) until very well combined. Add cooked bulgur, cumin, allspice, cinnamon, salt and pepper; process thoroughly. Add lamb, a little at a time, and process until thoroughly combined (or you can combine lamb by hand, if you prefer).

### Assemble and bake kibbeh:

Lightly grease pie plate with 1/2 tablespoon olive oil. Press half of bulgur mixture evenly onto bottom and up side of plate (up 1 inch if using skillet). Spoon filling evenly over bulgur mixture.

Spoon remaining bulgur mixture over filling and spread to cover, smoothing top. Brush top with remaining olive oil and score in a crosshatch pattern with a paring knife.

Bake kibbeh in middle of oven until cooked through, 35 to 40 minutes.

Preheat broiler. Broil kibbeh 5 to 7 inches from heat until top is golden brown and crusty, 3 to 5 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving

<http://www.weightwatchers.com/food/rcp/RecipePage.aspx?recipeid=272891> and

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/printerfriendly/Baked-Kibbeh-107351#ixzz2DHatYXoq>

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## LOBSTER POT PIE

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1 1/2 cups chopped yellow onion (1 large onion)

3/4 cup chopped fennel (1 fennel bulb)

1/4 pound unsalted butter

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

2 1/2 cups fish stock or clam juice

1 tablespoon Pernod

1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt

3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

3 tablespoons heavy cream

3/4 pound cooked fresh lobster meat

1 1/2 cups frozen peas (not "baby" peas)

1 1/2 cups frozen small whole onions

1/2 cup minced flat-leaf parsley

Pastry:

3 cups all-purpose flour

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon baking powder

8 tablespoons cold fresh lard, diced (1/4 pound)

8 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, diced

1/2 to 2/3 cup ice water

1 egg, beaten with 1 tablespoon water or heavy cream, for egg wash

Saute the onions and fennel with the butter in a large saute pan on medium heat until the onions are translucent, 10 to 15 minutes. Add the flour and cook on low heat for 3 more minutes, stirring occasionally. Slowly add the stock, Pernod, salt, and pepper and simmer for 5 more minutes. Add the heavy cream.

Cut the lobster meat into medium-sized cubes. Place the lobster, frozen peas, frozen onions, and parsley in a bowl (there is no need to defrost the vegetables). Pour the sauce over the mixture and check the seasonings. Set aside.

For the crust, mix the flour, salt, and baking powder in a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Add the lard and butter and pulse 10 times, until the fat is the size of peas. With the motor running,

add the ice water; process only enough to moisten the dough and have it just come together. Dump the dough out on a floured surface and knead quickly into a ball. Wrap the dough in plastic and allow it to rest for 30 minutes in the refrigerator.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Divide the dough in half and roll out each half to fit a 9 or 9 1/2-inch round by 2-inch high ovenproof glass or ceramic baking dish. Place 1 crust in the dish, fill with the lobster mixture, and top with the second crust. Crimp the crusts together and brush with the egg wash. Make 4 or 5 slashes in the top crust and bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, until the top is golden brown and the filling is bubbling hot.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/lobster-pot-pie-recipe/index.html>

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## SWEET PIES

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### COFFEE BUTTERCRUNCH PIE WITH SHAVED CHOCOLATE

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#### CRUST:

½ package pie-crust mix (measure contents of box into a measuring cup and use half)  
1 ounce unsweetened chocolate  
¼ cup light brown sugar, firmly packed  
¾ cup walnuts, chopped very fine – chopped not ground  
1 teaspoon vanilla paste  
1 tablespoon water

Place the pie-crust mix in a large mixing bowl.

Chop chocolate coarsely and then grind in a food processor. Stir into pie-crust mix. Stir in the sugar and nuts.

Mix vanilla and water in a small bowl. Pour mixture all over pie-crust mixture. Use a fork to toss and stir until mixed. Stir just briefly, but do not try to make smooth; it will hold together when you press crust in place.

Make sure oven rack is in middle of oven and preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Use a 9-inch glass pie plate and read separate directions for making crumb crust. Bake for 15 minutes.

Then freeze crust for one hour. While in freezer, make filling

#### FILLING:

1 ounce unsweetened chocolate  
1 stick unsalted butter  
¾ cup light brown sugar, firmly packed  
2 teaspoons dry instant coffee  
2 large eggs

Melt chocolate in stainless steel over pot of simmering water. Set aside.

In bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter. Add the sugar and beat at moderately high speed for 2 to 3 minutes. Mix in cooled chocolate and the dry instant coffee.

Add the eggs one at a time, beating for 5 minutes after each addition, and scraping the bowl occasionally with a rubber spatula.

Pour filling into cooled baked crust. Refrigerate for 4 to 6 hours or overnight. If freezing, freeze for one hour until filling is firm and then wrap with plastic wrap to make airtight. To thaw frozen pie, unwrap it and let stand overnight in your refrigerator.

Either just before serving or a few hours before, prepare the following whipped cream topping.

#### TOPPING:

2 cups heavy cream

2 tablespoons dry powdered (not granular) instant coffee

½ cup confectioners' sugar

Coarsely grated or shaved chocolate to sprinkle on top of pie

In a chilled bowl with chilled whisk beater, whip the cream with the instant coffee and sugar until the cream holds a definite shape. But do not over-beat; it must be firm enough to hold its shape when pie is served, but it is more delicious if it is slightly creamy, rather than stiff.

Spread the whipped cream smoothly over the filling. Or apply it in fancy swirls, using a pastry bag fitted with a star-tip. Sprinkle the top with grated or shaved chocolate. Refrigerate.

<http://www.trufflesandtrifles.com/recipeshow.aspx?NewsID=573>

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## PECAN PIE BARS

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For the base:

1 package of Duncan Hines butter Recipe cake mix

1/3 cup butter, softened and 1 egg -

For the filling:

Reserve 2/3 cup dry cake mix

1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar

1-1/2 cups dark corn syrup

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

3 eggs

1 cup chopped pecans

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 13 x 9-inch baking pan. Reserve 2/3 cup of dry cake mix for filling. In bowl of electric mixer, put cake mix, butter and 1 egg and beat at low speed until well blended. Press in bottom of greased pan. Bake at 350 for 15 minutes or until light golden brown. Meanwhile, in large bowl, combine reserved cake mix, brown sugar, corn syrup, vanilla and 3 eggs and beat at low speed until moistened. Beat one minute at medium speed or until well blended. remove pan from oven. Pour filling mixture over warm base. Sprinkle with pecans. Return pan to

oven; and bake an additional 30 to 35 minutes or until filling is set. Cool for 1 hour or until cooled. Cut into bars. If not using immediately, wrap and store in refrigerator.

<http://www.trufflesandtrifles.com/recipeshow.aspx?NewsID=19>

## CARAMEL-PEAR-CHEESECAKE TRIFLE

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4 tablespoons unsalted butter  
5 large slightly underripe Bartlett pears—peeled, cored and diced  
1 cup Vanilla Bean and Fleur de Sel Caramel Sauce  
1 teaspoon unflavored powdered gelatin  
16 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature  
3 cups cold heavy cream  
8 ounces gingersnap cookies, plus crushed cookies for garnish

1. In a large skillet, melt the butter. Add the diced pears. Cover and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until just softened, about 8 minutes. Add 1/2 cup of the caramel sauce, cover and cook over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until the pears are tender, 5 minutes. Scrape the pears onto a plate and refrigerate until cool.

2. In a small microwave-safe bowl, sprinkle the gelatin over 2 tablespoons of water. Let stand until softened, about 5 minutes. Microwave at high power for 5 seconds, just until the gelatin is melted. Transfer the gelatin mixture to a bowl and add the cream cheese and the remaining 1/2 cup of caramel sauce. Using an electric mixer, beat at medium-high speed until smooth, about 2 minutes.

3. In another bowl, whip 1 1/2 cups of the cream until firm peaks form. Fold the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture.

4. Spoon one-fourth of the mousse into a medium trifle bowl. Top with one-fourth of the gingersnaps and one-fourth of the pears. Repeat the layering, ending with a layer of pears. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

5. In a bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the remaining 1 1/2 cups of cream until soft peaks form. Dollop the cream over the trifle and garnish with crushed gingersnaps.



Vanilla Bean and Fleur de Sel Caramel Sauce

2 cups sugar  
1/2 cup water  
1 vanilla bean, split, seeds scraped  
1 cup heavy cream  
1/2 teaspoon fleur de sel

Put the sugar in a large saucepan and pour the water all around. Add the vanilla bean and seeds and cook over moderately high heat, stirring, until the sugar is dissolved. Using a wet pastry brush,

wash down any crystals from the side of the pan. Cook without stirring until a deep-amber caramel forms, about 5 minutes. Gently swirl the pan to color the caramel evenly.

Remove the pan from the heat and add the cream. When the bubbling subsides, bring the sauce to a boil and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until the hardened caramel is dissolved. Discard the vanilla bean. Stir in the fleur de sel and let cool

<http://www.foodandwine.com/recipes/caramel-pear-cheesecake-trifle>