

Crazy Easy Pecan Pie (dairy-free)

Make the crust at least an hour before so it has time to chill. Some say to chill it overnight and it will be better. If you have time, do it.

Ingredients for the Crust:

1 1/2 cups of all-purpose flour plus extra for your hands
1 stick of Earth Balance (cold from the fridge but not frozen)
1 or 2 tablespoons cold water, mixed with 1 teaspoon orange juice or other acid — plain white vinegar works too
1 pinch of salt
1 teaspoon sugar (if desired, this is optional)

Put the dry ingredients in a big bowl. Use a pastry cutter or two knives to cut the Earth Balance into the flour until the particles are about the size of peas. Add a little bit of your cold water/OJ combo and mix with your hands until dough is formed. Too dry? Add more water. Too wet? Sprinkle a bit more flour. You are aiming for the consistency of Play-Doh. For my purposes (press crust) you just need a big ball. But don't play with it! Overworked crust isn't tender-tasting.

Take a 9 inch pie pan and lightly oil and flour it. This is new this year — but I discovered it makes it a whole lot easier to get the pie out afterwards.

Once your pie pan is prepared, put the dough ball in your floured pan. Flour your hands to keep from sticking to the dough and press it flat, making sure to get it up the sides. Try to get the crust as even as possible. Cover with plastic wrap and put in the fridge. Light the candles and relax for an hour — or up to a day or two.

Ingredients for the Filling:

1 bag of pecans (6 oz.) — whole or pieces
1 cup of brown sugar (darker the better)
1 cup of Karo syrup (or substitute up to 1/3 maple syrup if you've got it)
2 tablespoons Earth Balance
2 teaspoons vanilla
3 eggs

My mom is going to kill me for saying this but it sort of doesn't matter how many pecans you use. I have used a whole bag, half a bag, two bags. Honestly, if you can fit them in the pan, you can pie them. I have toasted the nuts before baking too and I don't think it adds anything except the chance of burning them both before *and* during.

Mix the sugar and syrup with the vanilla in a big bowl. In a separate small bowl if you are nuking (or pan, if not), melt the Earth Balance. Set aside to cool.

Preheat the oven to 350.

Add the eggs to the sugars and mix well. You can't over mix this. Add the pecans. Once the melted Earth Balance is no longer hot (you don't want to cook those eggs), add it to the mixture and blend well.

Pour the whole mess into your chilled pie shell. Bake for just under an hour or until the top no longer shimmers to the touch or a toothpick to the center comes out clean. As always with pie, if the edges (or any other part of it) starts to get too dark too soon, put some foil over it.