



Makes: 1 9-inch pie

Prep Time: 5 minutes Bake Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

## Salted Caramel Pear Pie

### Crust:

- 1 double crust pie dough, such as Buttermilk Pie Crust, one shaped round and one rectangular
- All-purpose flour, for rolling dough
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp heavy cream for egg wash

### Salted Almond Caramel:

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup unsalted butter (preferably European butter), sliced into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup heavy cream, extra for egg wash
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp almond extract
- 1 tsp flaky sea salt

### Filling:

- 4 Anjou pears, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp lemon zest (suggest Meyer lemon if available)
- 1 lemon, juiced
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar
- 3 tbsp tapioca flour (or cornstarch)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp flaky sea salt
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch cubes and frozen

To make the salted almond caramel, heat a large sauce pan over medium heat. Combine  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar, swirl the pan to help them dissolve. Add slices of butter, bring to a boil and simmer until golden brown, about 10 minutes. At this stage, stir occasionally using a wooden spoon. Watch the mixture carefully as it can burn. Turn off heat and add heavy cream carefully as it will bubble intensely. While continuing to stir, add almond extract (for stronger flavor add 1 teaspoon almond

extract instead) and sea salt. Set aside to cool. This can be made in advance and kept in the refrigerator for a few weeks.

Let the prepared Buttermilk Pie Crusts come to room temperature, about 5 to 7 minutes before rolling out. On a lightly floured surface, roll out round disk to 1/8-inch thickness and larger than the circumference of your 9-inch pie dish. Gently fold into quarters and transfer to the pie dish. Trim excess with scissors or a knife along the rim and place pie dish in the fridge. Be careful not to stretch the dough or it will shrink back.

Cut second rectangular pie dough in half lengthwise. Roll one half (Dough A) to 9-inches in length and 1/4-inch thick. Roll remaining dough (Dough B) to 9-inches in length and 1/8-inch thickness. Work quickly to prevent the dough from getting warm. If needed, place them in the fridge to firm up during the process.

Dough A: Use a ruler to cut long even strips. For a square edge braid, cut into 1/4-inch strips with a sharp paring knife. Braid together keeping both ends loose; transfer to a sheet pan. For rounded edge braid, cut dough into six 1/4-inch strips and roll against floured board to round edges. Repeat braiding technique and transfer to the sheet pan, keep in the fridge while you roll the remaining dough. Separate layers with parchment if needed.

Dough B: Cut four 1-inch strips. Loosely twist 2 pieces together to create a cable knit effect and repeat; transfer to the same sheet pan.

Leftover dough from the bottom crust can be used for decorative cut outs in the shape of leaves and flowers. I prefer to use two different leaf shapes when possible. It may be necessary to roll a bit thinner and chill in the freezer for a few minutes. Dust each side of chilled leftover dough before using pie cutters or cookie cutters to cut out shapes. Lay them in a single layer on a quarter sheet pan dusted with flour, lay parchment paper between layers of pastry as needed. Place cut outs in the freezer.

In a large mixing bowl, fold pears, lemon zest (sometimes I zest the entire lemon for extra flavor), juice of 1 lemon, 1/4 cup sugar, tapioca flour, cinnamon, vanilla extract and sea salt. In a small bowl beat 1 egg with 1 tablespoon heavy cream. Set aside.

For the final assembly, add even layer of 1/4 cup caramel at room temperature into chilled pie crust. If caramel is too thick to handle, warm on low heat, just enough to loosen but not too hot that it will melt the pastry. Layer half of the pear mixture in an even layer, top with 1/4 cup caramel, layer remaining pears and drizzle about 1/8 cup caramel. Scatter frozen butter cubes evenly all over the top layer. If time permits, chill pie in fridge or freezer for 10 minutes. NOTE: There will be some leftover caramel, keep in fridge for a few weeks or drizzle warm caramel over each slice when serving.

Apply a very thin layer of egg wash around the rim of the pie using a small pastry brush, it will act as glue. Remove braids from fridge and bring to room temperature for a few minutes to prevent breakage. Arrange each element to create your design. When you're satisfied, trim the edges with scissors or a sharp paring knife. To complete the design, add a leaf and floral wreath border. Brush the back of the leaf cut outs one at a time with egg wash to secure and place in a random pattern or alternate directions. Use a variety of flower shapes if possible and nestle them into the leaves trying not to cover up too much of the lattice work. For visual interest you can stack different sized flowers on top of each other. However be cautious to create too many layers as the pie thickness will affect the taste.

Place pie in freezer to chill pastry, minimum of 20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 425°F, with a pizza stone or Baking Steel on middle rack if possible. Just before baking, gently brush the pastry with a thin even layer of egg wash all over, avoid pooling. If any pieces become loose, glue them down with a small dab of egg wash. Place pie on a rimmed sheet pan and loosely tent entire pie with foil avoiding contact with the pie. Bake on the middle rack for 20 minutes. Reduce oven to 375°F and remove foil. Finish baking until filling is bubbling, and golden brown about 60 minutes more. Watch the pie carefully, rotate if necessary. Pie must be violently bubbling to ensure filling is cooked and bottom crust is crispy. Let pie cool completely before serving, minimum of 4 to 6 hours

Chef's Tips:

To speed things up, you can always use 1 cup of store-bought salted caramel sauce or my recipe of [Salted Caramel Sauce](#).

It's also fine to bake a simpler pie by using store-bought pie dough, follow directions for the bottom crust and filling, and then place the second pie crust on top, with 4 slits to let air escape.

Recipe adapted from Judy Kim NYC