

Fran's Coconut Cream Pie

INGREDIENTS:

1 baked pie shell
1/3 c. sugar (slightly rounded)
1/4 c. cornstarch (slightly rounded)
1/4 tsp. salt
2 c. milk
1 c. cream of coconut
4 beaten egg yolks
2 Tbsp. butter or margarine
1 c. coconut (slightly blended in blender for a finer texture)
2 tsp. vanilla (preferably clear)
1/2 tsp. coconut extract
1 1/3 c. whipping cream, divided
More cream of coconut
Powdered sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c. coconut, toasted in the oven

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1-Prepare and bake a pie shell from your favorite pie crust recipe.
- 2- For Filling: Combine sugar, cornstarch and salt in a medium saucepan. Whisk in milk and cream of coconut. Whisk until dry ingredients are incorporated.
- 3- Cook and whisk continuously over medium heat until thickened and it begins to bubble. Reduce heat until you get a gentle bubbling boil and cook for 2 minutes.
- 4- Stir about a cup or more of the hot milk mixture into well-beaten egg yolks, whisking constantly as you pour. Return egg yolk mixture back to

filling in saucepan. Cook and stir until it begins to bubble again. Cook and stir for 2 minutes more.

5- Remove from heat. Stir in butter, vanilla, coconut extract. Pour filling through a strainer into a shallow bowl to strain out any lumps then stir in 1 c. coconut. Place saran wrap or wax paper directly on top of the surface and refrigerate until cold and set.

6- Once the filling is cold and set, in a separate bowl, whip 2/3 c. whipping cream until stiff peaks form. Stir in cream of coconut (about 1-2 Tbsp . You want the flavor and sweetness of the cream of coconut but don't want to make the cream too runny. Then add about ½ -1 Tbsp. powdered sugar to make it a little sweeter. You're looking for a thick slightly sweet cream.

7- Stir the cold filling gently to break up the set and then fold in the whipped cream mixture gently until it is well incorporated. Put in baked pie shell mounding in the center.

8- Whip remaining 2/3 c. cream until stiff peaks form. Add vanilla and powdered sugar to taste. This cream should be a little sweeter than the last. Then spread over the pie making a swoopy pattern with the back of a spoon.

9- Place ½ c. of coconut on a baking sheet and toast in a preheated 350 degree oven. Cook for 2 minutes at a time, shaking the pan or stirring with a spatula to keep the coconut moving. When golden brown, remove from the oven. Allow to cool completely then sprinkle desired amount over the whip cream layer to garnish. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours before serving.

NOTES:

-Coco Lopez is the brand of cream of coconut that I prefer. Upon opening the can, you will see it is separated into two consistencies. Stir together until smooth. Then measure.

- You can use a frozen store bought pie crust but I strongly suggest making your own homemade. It elevates the whole pie to the next level.

-Be very watchful while cooking on the stove top. Be careful to whisk the entire time and move the sauce off the sides and bottom of the pan. If you notice little brown chunks in your filling it is scorching on the bottom of the pan. If you address it quickly you can still save it. To do this, pour filling through a strainer into a new sauce pan and keep going. If you wait too long to rescue it or continue to cook it in the pan with scorched filling on the bottom it will have a terrible taste and will have brown scorched pieces in it.