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Holiday Baking Tips: Dessert Won't Be Humble Pie Anymore

By News Canada

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by: News Canada

(NC)—As the holiday season arrives, our menus are sure to include tasty treats and yummy desserts, including traditional and new, anything—but—humble pie flavours. Pies are a favourite way to end a meal and they've been part of our culture for a long time.

Did you know... the early Romans probably made the first pies, a humble pastry stuffed primarily with meat or other savoury fillings? The first recipe published by the Romans was for a rye-crusting goat cheese and honey pie. The word "pie" dates back to Middle English of the 14th century when it was also spelled "pye". During Tudor and Stuart times in England, pies were often made with pears and quince, as well as apples. English tradition credits Queen Elizabeth I with making the first cherry pie, but whether her majesty spent time in the kitchen is arguable. The first mention of a fruit pie in print appeared in 1590 in prose writer Robert Greene's *Arcadia*: "Thy breath is like the steame of apple-pyes."

Quick Home-Baked Pies

There is no doubt that the delectable aroma of a baking pie still works its magic on us. But in our increasingly time-starved lives, it is hard to get around to baking. "Some young women (and men), trained to use the microwave, have never had the opportunity to bake a pie from scratch," says Chris Glowienka, spokesperson for Sara Lee.

"Our newest addition, called Oven Fresh, is a throwback to a time when life had a more relaxed pace and there was time to slow down, spend a couple of hours in the kitchen and bake a fresh fruit pie for your family and friends. Now we do half of the work and you just pop our pies into the oven. And because you don't merely heat them through, these thoroughly modern pies let you experience real baking."

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The Oven Fresh pies, he says, include trusted and time-honoured flavours like Apple, Pumpkin, and Dutch Apple with its crunchy streusel topping. For something a little more special, Signature Selections by Sara Lee brings you Fruits of the Forest Deep Dish (made with blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, apples and rhubarb), Caramel Applenut Deep Dish and classic Southern Pecan.

"Many of our pies are free of preservatives," says Mr. Glowienka. "We use fruit that is flash frozen right after it's picked at peak ripeness and never pre-cooked. The fruit simmers in its own juice while the pie is in your oven. Sara Lee pies also have the light, flaky crust homemakers today have come to expect."

Even if you are pressed for time this holiday season, "bake" your own pie and watch smiles light up your guests' faces.

And why not take along one of these pies as a welcome additional to any holiday buffet or as a thoughtful hostess gift? It is sure to be appreciated.

For more pie information and baking tips go to

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Dessert Tips: Enjoy These Pie Possibilities

By News Canada

(NC)—There may not be a better dessert than a mouth-watering slice of pie fresh from the oven. But serving your pie with a dollop of whipped cream, or "a la mode" with a cool scoop of vanilla ice cream

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can dress up this treat. Add a dash more creativity and a humble pie becomes a true work of art that will have your family and friends coming back for seconds.

"You can make your own pie from scratch or serve one our new line of frozen "unbaked" pies –that look and taste just like they're homemade," says Chris Glowienka, spokesperson for Sara Lee. "Either way, here are some other 'pie possibilities' to elevate this favourite dessert from delectable comestible to mouthwatering masterpiece."

- Make individual treats by cutting a baked and chilled pumpkin pie into bite–sized squares. Place a decorative toothpick in each bite.
- Sprinkle the top of your apple pie with shredded cheddar cheese three to five minutes before the end of baking.
- Break up apple pie leftovers into an ovenproof dish, cover with grated cheese and raisins. Microwave or run under the broiler until the cheese melts. Yum!
- Remove the streusel topping from one of Sara Lee's frozen, unbaked Dutch Apple Pies and place it in a bowl. Mix the streusel with raisins nuts, dried fruit, or a combination. Replace streusel topping on the frozen pie and bake according to instructions. For a festive holiday flourish, cool the pie, and then add whipped topping and cranberry sauce.
- For a decadent "Pecan Sundae", cut out a circle of pecan pie and top with a scoop of butter pecan ice cream. Drizzle with butterscotch sauce, pile on whipped topping and garnish with crust crumbs from the pie and top with a maraschino cherry. Eat it and weep.

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