

## PUMPKIN PIE & NEW DEAL VODKA CRUST

*We are reprinting this phenomenal recipe which first appeared in Cook's Illustrated, and then again in Mark Bittman's Blog, 'Bitten'. Below are Mark's personal notes on preparation. Please note the last sentence, "Vodka is essential to the texture of the crust and imparts no flavor; do not substitute." Thanks Mark, we would not dream of substituting the vodka.*

*"If candied yams are unavailable, regular canned yams can be substituted. The best way to judge doneness is with an instant-read thermometer. The center 2 inches of the pie should look firm but jiggle slightly. The pie finishes cooking with residual heat; to ensure that the filling sets, cool it at room temperature and not in the refrigerator. To ensure accurate cooking times and a crisp crust, the filling should be added to the pre-baked crust when both the crust and filling are warm. Vodka is essential to the texture of the crust and imparts no flavor; do not substitute."*

### Ingredients:

#### **For the Crust:**

1 ¼ Cups	Unbleached all-purpose flour (6 1/4 ounces)
½ t	Table salt
1 T	Sugar
6 T	Cold, unsalted butter, cut into 1/4-inch slices
¼ Cup	Vegetable shortening, cold, cut into two pieces
2 T	Chilled New Deal Vodka
2 T	Cold water

#### **For the Filling:**

1 Cup	Heavy cream
1 Cup	Whole milk
3	Large eggs, plus 2 large yolks
1 t	Vanilla extract
1 can	Pumpkin puree (15 oz)
1 Cup	Drained candied yams from 15-ounce can (see note above)
¾ Cup	Sugar
¼ Cup	Maple syrup
2 t	Fresh ginger, grated
½ t	Ground cinnamon
¼ t	Ground nutmeg
1 t	Table salt

### Directions:

- For the Crust:**
- Sift together ¾ cup flour, salt, and sugar. In a mixer, add sifted ingredients along with butter and shortening and mix until homogenous dough just starts to collect in uneven clumps, about 10 seconds; dough will resemble cottage cheese curds with some very small pieces of butter remaining, but there should be no uncoated flour. Scrape bowl with rubber spatula and redistribute dough evenly around beater. Add remaining 1/2 cup flour and mix until mixture is evenly distributed around bowl and mass of dough has been broken up. Empty mixture into medium bowl.
- Sprinkle vodka and water over mixture. With rubber spatula, use folding motion to mix, pressing down on dough until dough is slightly tacky and sticks together. Flatten dough into 4-inch disk. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate at least 45 minutes or up to 2 days.
- Adjust oven rack to lowest position, place rimmed baking sheet on rack, and heat oven to 400 degrees. Remove dough from refrigerator and roll out on generously floured (up to 1/4 cup) work surface to 12-inch circle about 1/8 inch thick. Roll dough loosely around rolling pin and unroll into pie plate, leaving at least 1-inch overhang on each side. Working around circumference, ease dough into plate by gently lifting edge of dough with one hand while pressing into plate bottom with other hand. Refrigerate 15 minutes.
- Trim overhang to 1/2 inch beyond lip of pie plate. Fold overhang under itself; folded edge should be flush with edge of pie plate. Using thumb and forefinger, flute edge of dough. Refrigerate dough-lined plate until firm, about 15 minutes.
- Remove pie pan from refrigerator, line crust with foil, and fill with pie weights or pennies. Bake on rimmed baking sheet 15 minutes. Remove foil and weights, rotate plate, and bake 5 to 10 additional minutes until crust is golden brown and crisp. Remove pie plate and baking sheet from oven.
- For the Filling:**
- While pie shell is baking, whisk cream, milk, eggs, yolks, and vanilla together in medium bowl. Combine pumpkin puree, yams, sugar, maple syrup, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in large heavy-bottomed saucepan; bring to sputtering simmer over medium heat, 5 to 7 minutes. Continue to simmer pumpkin mixture, stirring constantly and mashing yams against sides of pot, until thick and shiny, 10 to 15 minutes.
- Remove pan from heat and whisk in cream mixture until fully incorporated. Strain mixture through fine-mesh strainer set over medium bowl, using back of ladle or spatula to press solids through strainer. Re-whisk mixture and transfer to warm prebaked pie shell. Return pie plate with baking sheet to oven and bake pie for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 300 degrees and continue baking until edges of pie are set (instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 175 degrees), 20 to 35 minutes longer. Transfer pie to wire rack and cool to room temperature, 2 to 3 hours. Cut into wedges and serve.

