



# ULSTER AMERICAN APPLE & BLACKBERRY TART

## the story

As I consider the Ulster-Scots heritage in both Northern Ireland and Appalachia what could be more classically American and also classically Ulster than the apple pie? Known as *apple tarts* in Northern Ireland these pies are a great tradition in County Armagh, also known as the *Apple County* where I grew up. In the autumn I spend an entire Saturday baking these for my freezer so I can enjoy them all winter and if you are like me and plan to make several to freeze, do not slit the top of the crust or bake; wait until you are ready, *then* prepare.

Also, to give this wonderfully traditional recipe a new twist I have added a taste of blackberries into the mix which add a delightful nuance to the flavor of the tart combining the sweetness of the berries with the sharpness of the apple. The results are just wonderful.

## how to make it

### Pie Crust ingredients

- 8 oz. (2 cups) all-purpose flour
- pinch salt
- 6 oz. (¾ cups) shortening
- 7 Tbsp. iced water
- beaten egg and milk (to glaze)
- 1 tsp granulated sugar (to dust)

### Pie Filling ingredients

- 4 large tart apples (5 cups peeled, & sliced)
- 6 oz. (1 cup) blackberries
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 5 ¼ oz (¾ cup) fine granulated sugar
- 3 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- good pinch ground cloves
- dash of salt
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter (cut in to small pieces)

1. Using a pastry cutter or food processor combine the flour, salt and the shortening by pulsing together for about 12-15 seconds or until the mixture comes together. Add the ice water until the mixture *comes away* from the sides of the bowl.
2. Cut the dough in half with a knife and work each piece with palm of your hands to make two circular balls. Gently press down using the palms of hands to form two circular discs. Refrigerate for 30 minutes to allow the dough to rest.
3. Next, prepare the filling by adding lemon juice to the prepared apples in a suitable bowl. Stir in the sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, salt, and blackberries.
4. When ready, roll out the first pastry ball on a lightly floured surface using a floured rolling pin to form a 12" circle. Gently ease the pastry into a 9" pie plate, folding any excess pastry under and trim.
5. Fill the pastry with the prepared apple and blackberry mixture and then *dot* the surface with butter.
6. Roll the remaining pastry ball to form another 12" circle and place it on top of the fruit, folding any excess pastry under and then trim with a sharp knife. For a fluted edge place your thumb against the inside of the pastry and press the dough around the thumb as if to pinch, using the other thumb and index finger or a fork to seal the edges. Cut a generous slit in the center to release air during baking.
7. Brush with a little beaten egg and milk and sprinkle with sugar.
8. Bake at 350° F on a foil-lined baking sheet (in case of juice spilling) for 50 minutes.
9. Best served warm with fresh whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.