



# Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas Apple Pie

## A Pie with a Secret

Hello, my dear. Come sit. Let's talk about apple pie. But not just any pie. This one is special. It comes from the Pennsylvania Dutch. They are wonderful cooks. Their secret? They use melted ice cream in the filling. I know! It sounds wild. But it makes the apples sweet and creamy. It holds everything together like a hug.

I learned this from my friend Martha years ago. She winked when she told me the secret. I still laugh at that. Why does this matter? Well, food is about sharing. It's about passing little secrets down. It keeps stories alive. What's a food secret someone shared with you?

## **The Heart of the Matter: The Filling**

Now, the apples. You must let them sit with the sugar and spices. Give them a full hour. They will make a lovely juice. This is the magic start. The juice soaks into the crust later. It makes every bite sing.

Use firm apples. I like a mix of Granny Smith and Honeycrisp. One is tart. One is sweet. Together, they are perfect. Fun fact: The Pennsylvania Dutch often used raisins for extra sweetness in hard winters. Do you like raisins in your pie, or do you skip them?

## **A Crust You Can Trust**

Do not fear the crust. My trick is frozen butter and sour cream. The sour cream makes it tender. The cold butter makes it flaky. Just pulse it in the machine until it looks like peas. Then wrap it up. Let it rest in the cold. Patience here makes a happy crust.

Why does this matter? A good crust is a promise. It promises that what's inside is worth waiting for. It is the first thing you taste. Make it with care. Roll it gently. Ease it into the plate like you're tucking in a child.

## **The Sweet, Sandy Topping**

This pie has a crumb topping. You mix flour, brown sugar, and melted butter. It will be like wet sand. You chill it. It gets hard. Then you break it into little crumbs over the apples. It bakes into a golden, sugary blanket.

When it bakes, your whole house will smell like cinnamon and butter. Doesn't that smell amazing? That smell is memory. It tells everyone

that something good is coming. What baking smell makes you feel most at home?

## The Final, Important Wait

Here is the hard part. When the pie comes out, you must let it cool. Wait four hours. Overnight is even better. I know, it's cruel! But the filling needs to set. If you cut it warm, it will run all over.

Waiting makes it slice clean and perfect. It is a lesson in delayed joy. The best things are worth waiting for. So brew some tea. Set the table. Let the pie rest. Tomorrow, you will have a slice of heaven.

## Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
All-purpose flour	1 1/4 cups (6 1/4 oz)	For the crust
Unsalted butter	8 tbsp, cut & frozen	For the crust
Ice water	1/4 cup	For the crust
Sour cream	4 teaspoons	For the crust
Granulated sugar	1 1/2 teaspoons	For the crust
Salt	1/2 teaspoon	For the crust
Apples (peeled, cored, sliced)	2 1/2 lbs (1134g)	For the filling
Granulated sugar	1/2 cup (3 1/2 oz)	For the filling
Melted vanilla ice cream	1/2 cup	For the filling
Raisins	1/2 cup	For the filling (optional)
Lemon juice	1 tablespoon	For the filling
Vanilla extract	1 teaspoon	For the filling
Ground cinnamon	1 teaspoon	For the filling

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Salt	1/2 teaspoon	For the filling
All-purpose flour	1 cup (5 oz)	For the topping
Light brown sugar	1/2 cup packed (3 1/2 oz)	For the topping
Unsalted butter, melted	6 tablespoons	For the topping
Salt	1/2 teaspoon	For the topping





## Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas Apple Pie

# A Cozy Christmas Pie from My Kitchen to Yours

Hello, my dear. Come sit at the table. Let's talk about my favorite Christmas pie. This is a Pennsylvania Dutch recipe. It is full of sweet apples and a crumbly topping. My own grandmother taught me to make it. I still laugh at that. I was about your age, and I used far too much cinnamon! The secret is a little melted ice cream in the filling. Doesn't that sound wonderfully strange? It makes the apples so soft and sweet. It feels like a hug from the oven.

See also [Sweet and Buttery Peach Bars with Crust](#)

We will take our time. Good pie is never rushed. I will guide you through each step. Remember, cooking is about joy, not perfection. If your crust tears, just patch it. My first one looked like a map! Ready your bowls and a happy heart. Let's begin.

## Step 1: The Dough

First, we make the dough. Mix the ice water and sour cream in a small bowl. In your food processor, pulse the flour, sugar, and salt. Scatter your frozen butter pieces on top. Pulse until the butter looks like large peas. Now, add the sour cream mixture. Pulse until it forms clumps. (A hard-learned tip: Keep that butter cold! It makes the crust beautifully flaky.)

## Step 2: Chilling the Dough

Turn the dough onto some plastic wrap. Press it into a flat disk. Wrap it up tight. It needs a long nap in the fridge. Let it chill for one hour. This

rest makes it easier to roll later. You can even make this dough two days ahead. I often do this on a quiet afternoon.

### **Step 3: The Filling**

Now, the fun part—the filling! Peel and slice your apples. I love a mix of tart and sweet ones. Toss them with the sugar, cinnamon, lemon juice, and vanilla. Here is the magic. Pour in that half cup of melted vanilla ice cream. Add raisins if you like them. Let this sit for an hour. The apples will become friends with the syrup. What's your favorite apple for baking? Share below!

### **Step 4: Rolling the Crust**

Time to roll the crust. Let your dough sit out for ten minutes first. On a floured counter, roll it into a big circle. Gently lay it in your pie plate. Trim the extra dough and crimp the edges with your fingers. I make little pinches. It looks homey. Pop the whole plate back in the fridge to firm up.

### **Step 5: The Topping**

Make the topping. Simply stir the flour, brown sugar, and salt with the melted butter. It will form lovely clumps. Chill this too. Everything being cold helps the pie bake just right.

### **Step 6: Assembly & Baking**

Assembly! Place your crust on a baking sheet. Add the apples, pressing them down gently. Pour every last drop of syrup over them. Crumble the topping all over the top. Pat it lightly. Into the oven it goes. Bake until the top is golden brown. Your whole house will smell like Christmas.

## Step 7: The Patient Wait

This is the hardest step. You must let the pie cool. Wait at least four hours, or overnight. The filling needs to set. I know, the wait is terrible! But it is worth it. A warm slice will be a saucy mess. A patient slice is pure heaven.

See also [Soft Chewy Valentine Heart Sugar Cookies](#)

**Cook Time:** About 1 hour 10 minutes

**Total Time:** About 7 hours (with chilling and cooling)

**Yield:** 8 servings

**Category:** Dessert, Holiday

## Give This Classic Your Own Twist

Once you master the classic, try a little change. It makes the recipe your own. Here are three ideas I love.

- **The Nutty Crunch:** Add a handful of chopped pecans to the crumb topping. They toast up so nicely in the oven.
- **The Berry Merry:** Replace half the raisins with dried cranberries. It adds a cheerful, tart little pop.
- **The Ginger Snap:** Mix a teaspoon of ground ginger into the filling. It gives a warm, spicy kick perfect for a snowy day.

Which one would you try first? Comment below!

## Serving It Up with Style

This pie is a star all on its own. But a few extras make it a celebration. For a real treat, serve a slice with a scoop of vanilla bean ice cream. The melty cream on the warm pie is divine. A dollop of softly whipped cream



is my everyday favorite. A sprinkle of flaky sea salt on top is a modern trick I adore.

What to drink? For the grown-ups, a small glass of sweet apple cider bourbon is lovely. For everyone, a steaming mug of spiced apple cider completes the picture. The spices dance together so well. Which would you choose tonight?



## Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas Apple Pie

### Keeping Your Apple Pie Cozy

This pie is best made a day ahead. It needs time to set. After it cools, you can keep it on the counter for two days. Just cover it with a bowl or foil.

For longer storage, wrap it well and freeze it. I freeze mine whole. I once gave a frozen pie to my neighbor in July. She said it was a sweet winter surprise in summer!

To reheat, warm slices in a low oven. This brings back the lovely spice smells. Batch cooking matters because it spreads joy. You can have a pie ready for any surprise guest.

**Have you ever tried storing a pie this way? Share your story below!**

### Pie Problems and Simple Fixes

First, a soggy bottom crust. No one likes that. To avoid it, make sure your dough is firm and cold before filling. I remember my first pie had a soggy bottom. I was so disappointed!

Second, the filling is too runny. This is why we let the apples sit for an hour. They release their juice. You can mix that juice right in. It makes the flavor deep and rich.

Third, the topping burns. If the top browns too fast, tent it with foil. This simple trick saves your pie. Fixing small issues builds your cooking confidence. A good pie fills your kitchen with happy smells.

**Which of these problems have you run into before?**

## **Your Quick Pie Questions**

**Q: Can I make this gluten-free?**

A: Yes. Use your favorite gluten-free flour blend for both the crust and topping.

**Q: How far ahead can I make it?**

A: The dough can be frozen for a month. The baked pie freezes well for three months.

**Q: I don't have raisins. What can I use?**

A: Dried cranberries are lovely. Or just leave them out. The pie will still be wonderful.

**Q: Can I double the recipe?**

A: Absolutely. Make two pies. One to keep and one to give to a friend.

**Q: Any special tip?**

A: Fun fact: The melted ice cream in the filling is an old Pennsylvania Dutch trick. It adds a wonderful, creamy richness.

See also [Lucky Charm Cereal Bars for St Patrick's Day](#)

**Which tip will you try first?**

## **From My Kitchen to Yours**

I hope you enjoy making this special pie. It holds so many good memories for me. Baking is about sharing love and stories. I would love to see your creation.

Share a photo of your finished pie. Let me see your beautiful, crimped crust. Your kitchen adventures make me so happy.

**Have you tried this recipe? Tag us on Pinterest  
@ElowensKitchen!**

Happy cooking!  
—Elowen Thorn.







## Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas Apple Pie





[Print Recipe](#)

# **Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas Apple Pie**

Author: Elowen Thorn



Cooking Method: [Baking](#)

Cuisine: [American](#)



Courses: [Dessert](#)





Difficulty: **Beginner**



Prep time: **30 minutes**



Cook time: **1 hour 10 minutes**



Rest time: **4 minutes**



Total time: **5 minutes**



Servings: **8 servings**





Calories:**475 kcal**

Best Season: **Summer**

## **Description**

A classic, comforting dessert featuring a flaky sour cream crust, a

spiced apple and raisin filling, and a sweet, crumbly topping.

## Ingredients

### Crust

- ☐ 1/4 cup ice water
- ☐ 4 teaspoons sour cream
- ☐ 1 1/4 cups (6 1/4 ounces/177 grams) all-purpose flour
- ☐ 1 1/2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- ☐ 1/2 teaspoon salt
- ☐ 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 1/4-inch pieces and frozen for 15 minutes

### Filling

- ☐ 2 1/2 pounds (1134 grams) apples, peeled, cored, halved, and sliced 1/4 inch thick
- ☐ 1/2 cup melted vanilla ice cream
- ☐ 1/2 cup raisins (optional)
- ☐ 1/2 cup (3 1/2 ounces/99 grams) granulated sugar
- ☐ 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ☐ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ☐ 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ☐ 1/2 teaspoon salt

### Topping

- ☐ 1 cup (5 ounces/142 grams) all-purpose flour
- ☐ 1/2 cup packed (3 1/2 ounces/99 grams) light brown sugar
- ☐ 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

- 1/2 teaspoon salt

## Instructions

1. **For the crust:** Combine water and sour cream in bowl. Process flour, sugar, and salt in food processor until combined, about 5 seconds. Scatter butter over top and pulse until butter is size of large peas, about 10 pulses. Add sour cream mixture and pulse until dough forms clumps and no dry flour remains, about 12 pulses, scraping down sides of bowl as needed.
2. Turn dough onto sheet of plastic wrap and form into 4-inch disk. Wrap tightly in plastic and refrigerate for 1 hour. (Wrapped dough can be refrigerated for up to 2 days or frozen for up to 1 month. If frozen, let dough thaw completely on counter before rolling.)
3. **For the filling:** Toss all ingredients in large bowl until apples are evenly coated. Let sit at room temperature for at least 1 hour or up to 2 hours.
4. Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Let chilled dough sit on counter to soften slightly, about 10 minutes, before rolling. Roll dough into 12-inch circle on lightly floured counter. Loosely roll dough around rolling pin and gently unroll it onto 9-inch pie plate, letting excess dough hang over edge. Ease dough into plate by gently lifting edge of dough with your hand while pressing into plate bottom with your other hand.
5. Trim overhang to 1/2 inch beyond lip of plate. Tuck overhang under itself; folded edge should be flush with edge of plate. Crimp dough evenly around edge of plate using your fingers. Wrap dough-lined plate loosely in plastic and refrigerate until dough is firm, at least 30 minutes.
6. **For the topping:** Stir all ingredients in bowl until no dry spots remain and mixture forms clumps. Refrigerate until ready to use.
7. Place dough-lined plate on parchment paper-lined rimmed baking

sheet. Working with 1 large handful at a time, distribute apple mixture in plate, pressing into even layer and filling in gaps before adding more. Take care not to mound apple mixture in center of plate. Pour any remaining liquid from bowl into pie. Break topping (it will harden in refrigerator) into pea-size crumbs and distribute evenly over apple mixture. Pat topping lightly to adhere.

8. Bake pie on sheet until top is golden brown and paring knife inserted in center meets no resistance, about 1 hour 10 minutes, rotating sheet halfway through baking. Let pie cool on wire rack for at least 4 hours or preferably overnight. Serve.

## Notes

Nutrition information is an estimate for one serving, calculated without optional raisins. For best results, use a mix of tart and sweet apples like Granny Smith and Honeycrisp.

Keywords: Apple Pie, Dutch Apple Pie, Christmas, Holiday Baking