

RASPBERRY RUGELACH SLAB PIE

WITH A CREAM CHEESE CRUST

Serves 16 to 24

Cookie-like and slim with a rich cream cheese crust, rugelach pie is reminiscent of the favorite crescent-shaped, jammy, nutty cookie found in my holiday baking lineup. And it's infinitely quicker to make than its fussy cookie cousin, delivering the same fruit and nut goodness pillowed in tender dough. All the joy, none of the fuss. Slice into slim rectangles and serve up for an after-school or teatime treat. Delicate small squares nestled in paper cups are an easy-to-pass-around dessert for a bat mitzvah or a bridal shower. Use the best jam you can find, something made from lots of fruit and not too much sugar, and always use toasted nuts. Have fun creating nutty, fruity combinations.

Make Ahead: Assemble the pie right up to the point of glazing with egg wash and baking. It will keep refrigerated for 2 days or frozen for up to 3 months. Egg wash the pie and sprinkle with sugar right before baking.

CREAM CHEESE CRUST

2½ cups plus
2 tablespoons (325 g)
all-purpose flour

8 tablespoons (113 g)
unsalted butter, cubed and
frozen for 20 minutes

8 tablespoons (113 g)
cream cheese, cubed and
refrigerated for 20 minutes

¼ teaspoon kosher salt

½ cup (120 ml) ice water

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For the crust: In the food processor, pulse the flour, butter, cream cheese, and salt until the fat and cheese are in small pieces coated with flour, about 15 times. Add the ice water all at once and process until the mixture almost forms a ball. Form the dough into a 6- by 4-inch rectangle using plastic wrap and a bench scraper to firmly press the dough into a cohesive form. Wrap tightly and refrigerate a minimum of 4 hours.

Remove the dough from the refrigerator and allow it to warm slightly. Divide the dough into two pieces, one slightly larger than the other. Roll out the larger piece to 11 by 15 inches and place in the slab pie pan, pressing it into the corners of the pan and allowing the excess to drape over the sides. Refrigerate. Roll out the second piece of dough to 10 by 14 inches, place it on a lightly floured sheet of parchment, and refrigerate.

Heat the oven to 400°F; if you have one, place a baking stone, Baking Steel, or inverted baking sheet on the center rack to heat (see page 4).

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FILLING

10 to 12 ounces (285 g to 340 g) best-quality raspberry jam (1¼ to 1½ cups)

1 cup (115 g) finely chopped toasted pecans

½ cup (21 g) soft bread crumbs

2 tablespoons (28 g) cold, unsalted butter, cubed

1 egg yolk

1 tablespoon cold water

3 tablespoons sparkling sugar

To fill the pie: Remove the top crust from the refrigerator and pierce all over with the tines of a fork or a docking tool. Spoon the jam across the bottom crust and spread evenly from edge to edge. Sprinkle with the pecans and bread crumbs. Dot the surface with the butter. Cap with the top crust and crimp and slash.

Stir together the egg yolk and water. Sprinkle the entire surface generously with sparkling sugar. Slide the pie into the oven (on top of the steel, stone, or baking sheet if using) and bake for 40 to 45 minutes, until shiny golden brown. Cool before serving.

Techniques: Cream Cheese Crust (page 37), Mixing and Rolling Out (page 14), Crimp and Slash (page 24)

Swaps:

- I swoon for the raspberry/pecan combination, but don't let me stop you from trying apricot jam and almonds, or strawberry jam and macadamia nuts, or plum jam and hazelnuts, or blood orange marmalade and pine nuts.
- Omit the bread crumbs and top crust and top the pie with Granola Streusel (page 85) for a chewy treat, making it more like an energy or breakfast bar.