

Cherry Pie

2½ pounds sour cherries (preferably Morello)	1 egg
1-1½ cups sugar	1 teaspoon water
⅓ cup cornstarch	1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon lemon juice	Sugar for sprinkling
1 teaspoon almond extract	Your favorite pie crust
¼ teaspoon salt	

Drain the jarred Morello cherries. You should have about 3 cups of liquid. In a saucepan whisk together 1 cup of sugar, the cornstarch, and the salt. Then whisk in the 3 cups of cherry liquid. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens.

Add the cherries and continue to cook, checking for thickness. If the mixture is too thin, mix a little more cornstarch with water and add to the cherries. If too thick, add a bit of water.

Taste the mixture for sweetness. If too tart, add the remaining ½ cup sugar and cook until thoroughly dissolved. Stir in the tablespoon of lemon juice and the teaspoon of almond extra. Set aside to cool.

Roll out the bottom pie crust (larger than the size of the pan) and fit into a 9-inch pie pan, leaving some crust as an overhang. Beat the egg with water and paint the bottom crust with the egg wash. Pour the cherries into the bottom crust. Dot the cherries with the unsalted butter.

Roll out the top crust, also larger than the the size of the pie pan. Cut the top crust into ½-inch-wide strips. Lay half of the strips horizontally, using the longest strips at the center where the diameter is the greatest. Fold back every other strip (numbers 2, 4, etc.), then place a strip vertically and unfold the folded horizontal strips. Next fold back every other strip (numbers 1, 3, etc.) , then place another vertical strip, unfolding the folded horizontal strips. Continue the process until the pie is covered in a lattice.

Gather the ends of the strips and pinch together with the overhang from the bottom crust. Raise the pinched edged and form a scallop shape with your fingers or the handle of a butter knife. Carefully brush the lattice strips with the remaining egg wash, and sprinkle sugar over each strip.

Chill the pie for about 30 minutes. Place a baking sheet on the middle rack of the oven and preheat to 400°. Place the chilled pie on the hot baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes. Then lower the heat to 375° and bake for another 20-30 minutes, until the filling is beginning to bubble and the crust is nicely browned.

Cool on a rack for at least 3-4 hours before slicing and serving.