

Dakota Peach Kuchen

From *Cook's Country* | August/September 2014

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

This combination of rich yeasted dough, creamy custard, and fresh fruit is a coffee cake that comes to us via South Dakota. To make the rich dough turn out light and tender, we let the dough rise and then let it rest in the fridge before we shape it into two rounds. Another rise ensures maximum flavor and lightness. We enrich our cream-based custard with an extra egg yolk and flavor it with vanilla extract. After pressing the doughs down into two cake pans, we fill them with the custard and sliced peaches. A sprinkling of cinnamon is the finishing touch before the kuchen go into the oven.

MAKES TWO 9-INCH KUCHENS

The dough will need 2 hours to rise plus 1 hour to chill in the refrigerator. We developed this recipe using dark cake pans; if your pans are light, increase the baking time in step 7 to 55 to 60 minutes.

INGREDIENTS

CRUST

- 1/2** cup whole milk
- 2** large eggs
- 2 1/2** cups (12 1/2 ounces) all-purpose flour
- 1** tablespoon sugar
- 2** teaspoons instant or rapid-rise yeast
- 1/2** teaspoon salt
- 8** tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces and softened

FRUIT AND CUSTARD

- 1** pound fresh peaches, peeled, halved, pitted, and cut into 1/2-inch wedges or 12 ounces frozen sliced peaches, thawed
- 2** tablespoons plus 3/4 cup (5 1/4 ounces) sugar
- 1** large egg plus 1 large yolk
- 1/4** teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4** cups heavy cream
- 4** tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 4 pieces
- 1/2** teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4** teaspoon ground cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. FOR THE CRUST: Grease large bowl. Whisk milk and eggs in 2-cup liquid measuring cup until combined. Using stand mixer fitted with dough hook, mix flour, sugar, yeast, and salt on medium-low speed until combined, about 5 seconds. With mixer running, slowly

add milk mixture and knead until dough forms, about 1 minute.

2. With mixer still running, add butter 1 piece at a time until incorporated. Continue kneading until dough clears sides of bowl but still sticks to bottom, 8 to 12 minutes (dough should be soft and sticky).

3. Transfer dough to greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let rise on counter until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Punch down dough and divide into 2 equal balls. Wrap each ball in plastic, transfer to refrigerator, and let rest for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.

4. Grease two dark-colored 9-inch round cake pans. Roll chilled doughs into two 9-inch disks on lightly floured counter. Transfer to prepared pans, pushing dough to edges of pans. Cover pans loosely with plastic and let rise on counter until puffy, about 1 hour. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees.

5. FOR THE FRUIT AND CUSTARD: Meanwhile, toss peaches with 2 tablespoons sugar in bowl, then transfer to colander set in sink; let sit for 25 minutes. Whisk remaining 3/4 cup sugar, egg and yolk, and salt in medium bowl until combined. Heat cream in medium saucepan over medium heat until just beginning to simmer.

6. Slowly whisk hot cream into egg mixture. Transfer cream mixture back to saucepan and cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens and coats back of spoon, 3 to 5 minutes. Strain custard through fine-mesh strainer set over medium bowl. Whisk in butter and vanilla and transfer to refrigerator to cool until dough is ready. (Custard can be made up to 24 hours in advance but does not need to be fully chilled before going into crust.)

7. Leaving 1-inch border all around, press down centers of doughs with bottom of dry measuring cup to deflate and create wells for peaches and custard. Arrange peaches, evenly spaced, in circular pattern in depressed dough bottoms, avoiding border. Pour custard evenly over peaches in each pan, about 1 cup per pan (you may have a few tablespoons extra). Sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake until crusts are golden brown and centers jiggle slightly when shaken, 35 to 40 minutes, switching and rotating pans halfway through baking. Let cool completely. Remove kuchen from pans using flexible spatula. Slice and serve.

KUCHEN CONSTRUCTION

It might look like a fancy tart, but kuchen is remarkably easy to make.

1. Deflate the centers of the doughs after rising.



2. Arrange the fruit over the doughs, leaving a border around the edges.



3. Pour the custard over the fruit and bake.

