



## BITE by BITE

Conquering My Culinary  
Bucket List One Dish at a Time

By Emily Banks Wooten

“IT COULD BE ARGUED THAT THERE IS AN ELEMENT OF ENTERTAINMENT IN EVERY PIE, AS EVERY PIE IS INHERENTLY A SURPRISE BY VIRTUE OF ITS CRUST.”

– JANET CLARKSON

“WE MUST HAVE A PIE. STRESS CANNOT EXIST IN THE PRESENCE OF A PIE.”

– DAVID MAMET



“PIE AND COFFEE IS APPROXIMATELY THE THIRD BEST SOCIAL INTERACTION A MAN CAN HOPE TO HAVE WITH A WOMAN.”

– UNKNOWN



THE

# Perfect

## SPRINGTIME PIE

**I**t is officially the fourth anniversary of “Bite by Bite.” This began as a humble pursuit, conceived right around the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing shutdown, and has covered a lot of culinary ground since that time. There have been great successes as well as a few failures along the way. I wrote about pie in the first installment which ran on March 15, 2020, the day after Pi Day, so that has become my tradition – to write about pie each year on the anniversary of “Bite by Bite.”

Just in case you need a refresher – Pi Day is observed on March 14 (3-14) because three, one and four are the first three significant

digits of  $\pi$ , the mathematical constant in which a circle’s circumference divided by its diameter equals approximately 3.14 or Pi.

I first heard about Atlantic Beach Pie several years ago and was immediately intrigued because the crust is made from crushed saltine crackers and melted butter, something that struck me as rather novel. I’ve wanted to try it ever since.

According to Margaux Laskey, an associate editor for New York Times Cooking, Atlantic Beach Pie is adapted from Bill Smith, who retired in 2019 after 25 years as the chef at Crook’s Corner, a Chapel Hill, N.C. restaurant that closed in June 2021. He was inspired by the lemon pies he ate at seafood restaurants in Atlantic Beach, N.C., while vacationing there as a child.

It was simple to make and very refreshing and if you’re a fan of lemon pie or Key lime pie, then this will be right up your alley. Try it. I think you will like it. ■



### Atlantic Beach Pie

From southernliving.com

- 1 ½ cups finely crushed saltine crackers (from 1 sleeve, about 37 crackers)
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 large egg white, lightly beaten
- 1 (14-oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 4 large egg yolks
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice (from 2 large limes)
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice (from 2 lemons)
- 1 ½ cups heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- Lemon and lime zests, for garnish

#### Make crust:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Stir together crushed crackers, melted butter, sugar and egg white in a medium bowl until combined. Transfer mixture to a 9-inch glass pie plate; firmly press on bottom and sides. Freeze for 10 minutes.

#### Bake pie crust:

Bake in a preheated oven until the crust is lightly browned, about 20 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool slightly, about 10 minutes.

#### Mix pie filling:

Meanwhile, whisk together condensed milk and egg yolks until smooth. Whisk in lime juice and lemon juice until combined. Pour lime mixture into the warm crust.

#### Bake whole pie:

Bake at 350 degrees until the center is just set, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool for 1 hour. Refrigerate until chilled, about 2 hours.

#### Top with whipped cream:

Beat cream and powdered sugar in a large bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until stiff peaks form, about 2 minutes. Spread whipped cream topping over chilled pie, leaving about a ½-inch border of custard showing around the crust. Garnish with lemon and lime zests, if desired. Pie can be stored, covered, without whipped cream topping, in the refrigerator for up to 4 days. Spread with topping just before serving.

