

NINETEENTH-CENTURY MINCE PIE

The following recipe for a full-bodied, sweet and beefy mince pie is based on Lydia Maria Child's "Mince Pies," as published in *The American Frugal Housewife* (1833). The original recipe, with commentary, can be found in Keith Stavely and Kathleen Fitzgerald's *Northern Hospitality: Cooking by the Book in New England* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2011).

MAKES ONE NINE-INCH PIE, EIGHT SERVINGS

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

1/3 pound stewing beef, cut into chunks
1 1/2 cups water
2 tablespoons brandy
1/8 pound beef suet, finely chopped
1/2 cup sugar
2 medium firm apples, pared, cored,
and finely chopped

3/4 cup raisins
2/3 cup cider
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg
2 9-inch pie crusts, store bought
or from the "Short Pastry"
handout

In a small saucepan, boil the stewing beef gently in the water until tender (about 30 minutes).

Remove the beef from the cooking liquid and boil the suet in it for 10 minutes. Drain.

Mix together the beef, suet, and all the remaining ingredients, and set aside.

Line a pie pan with one of the crusts. Then line the inside of the crust with a round of parchment paper, and fill the bottom with pie weights, dried beans, or rice. Bake the crust for about 15 minutes, until just beginning to brown. Remove from the oven, lift out the lining, and cool slightly on a wire rack.

Reduce the oven temperature to 300° F. Spoon the mincemeat filling into the partially-baked bottom crust. Put on the top crust, and carefully crimp both crusts together. Place the pie on a baking sheet and bake for about 1 hour, until the top crust is golden. Remove from the oven and cool slightly on a wire rack before serving.