

PIES & PASTRIES

BANANA CREAM PIE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH PIE

I love a pie that's fast and easy, and nothing could be faster or easier than a cookie crust. Plus a banana cream pie is just one of those nostalgic pies that puts a smile on your face. The buttery shortbread crust paired with vanilla rum cream and fresh bananas is truly a match made in heaven!

CRUST

- 2 cups ground shortbread cookies
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 pound (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

FILLING AND TOPPING

Vanilla Pastry Cream

- 2 tablespoons dark rum
- 2 large or 3 small bananas, thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise, or 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

MAKE THE CRUST: In a bowl, stir together the shortbread crumbs, sugar, melted butter, vanilla, and salt. Press the mixture into the

bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch pie plate. Bake for 10 minutes to set the crust. Let the crust cool completely before filling.

MAKE THE FILLING: Prepare the pastry cream according to the recipe and stir in the rum when you stir in the vanilla and butter.

Once the crust has cooled, spread one-third of the pastry cream evenly over the bottom of the crust. Arrange a single layer of bananas on top of the cream. Repeat this process two more times, ending with bananas.

MAKE THE TOPPING: In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, start whipping the cream on low speed. When the cream just begins to gain volume, slowly add the sugar and vanilla (either scrape in the seeds from the vanilla bean or add the extract). Continue to whip on medium speed until stiff peaks form.

Spread the whipped cream on top of the pie using a small offset spatula. Chill for at least 3 hours before serving.

chef it up!

Get fancy with the whipped cream here. Fit a pastry bag with a #8 star tip, scoop the cream into the bag, and pipe rosettes (see “[Decorating with Icing](#)”) all around the outside edge of the pie. Since you’ll be leaving some bananas exposed, lightly brush them with some lemon juice to keep them from browning. For an added flavor twist, drizzle the top of the pie (just the bananas) with some [Calvados Caramel Sauce](#) or [Chocolate Sauce](#).

INSIDER TIP • VANILLA PASTE

When I’m working in a restaurant kitchen, I have access to a huge supply of vanilla beans. But when I’m at home, I count pennies just like everyone else, and vanilla beans are really expensive. (Not to mention that the overpriced vanilla beans you find in supermarkets are old and dried out.) So here’s the solution I’ve found for myself at

home: I use vanilla bean paste, which is really reasonably priced. If you want to try it, you can swap it in for the vanilla beans or extract in any of my recipes. If a recipe calls for the seeds of 1 vanilla bean, use $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of the paste (and 2 beans would be 1 teaspoon paste); and if the recipe calls for extract, substitute the paste in an equal amount.

