



VEGAN & GLUTEN-FREE Mini Finnish "Mustikkapiirakka" Blueberry Pies

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 15 / **Cook Time** 22 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

fold: to gently and slowly mix a light ingredient into a heavier ingredient so as not to lose air and to keep the mixture tender, such as incorporating whipped egg whites into a cake batter or folding blueberries into pancake batter; folding is a gentler action than mixing or whisking.

whisk: to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

Equipment

- ☐ Oven
- ☐ Large mixing bowl
- ☐ Dry measuring cups
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Fork (to mix)
- ☐ Liquid measuring cup
- ☐ Wooden spoon
- ☐ Muffin pan

Ingredients

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- ☐ Pie Crust:
- ☐ 1 1/4 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour
- ☐ 1/8 tsp salt

- ☐ 1 1/2 T sugar
- ☐ 2 T vegetable oil
- ☐ 3 oz or 3/4 stick cold dairy-free/nut-free butter
- ☐ 1/4 C very cold water
- ☐ Pie Custard:
- ☐ 3/4 C canned coconut milk
- ☐ 1/4 C granulated sugar
- ☐ 1 tsp certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract
- ☐ 1 pinch salt
- ☐ 1/4 C water
- ☐ 1 T arrowroot powder
- ☐ 1 tsp tapioca flour
- ☐ 1 C blueberries

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Soy: Substitute canola oil or other nut-free oil for vegetable oil.

Instructions

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intro

We are making Vegan and Gluten-Free Finnish Mini "Mustikkapiirakka" Blueberry Pies! The pie's name is pronounced "moo-stee-kah-PEER-ahk-kah."

preheat + measure + mix

Preheat your oven to 375 F. Start by making the pie crust. Combine **1 1/4 cups gluten and nut free flour**, **1/8 teaspoon salt**, and **1 1/2 tablespoons sugar** in a large mixing bowl. Measure and add **2 tablespoons of oil** to the bowl, then mix with a fork.

chop + mix

Chop up **3 ounces of cold, dairy free butter** into little pieces and add to the mixing bowl. Mix again with a fork. There should be little chunks of "butter" left in the flour mixture—it makes the crust flaky!

add + mix

Add the **1/4 cup of cold water** a little at a time, mixing into the dough after each addition until you get the consistency of pie dough. You may not need to use all the water.

press + bake

Press about 1 tablespoon of pie crust into each well of a muffin pan, spreading it out evenly. Then pop the pan into the oven for about 2 minutes until the crusts begin to get slightly golden. Remove the pan but leave the oven on.

shake + combine + measure + add

Now it's time to make the pie custard! First, either shake the coconut milk can or whisk to combine the coconut cream at the top with the milk—you want both for this custard! Next, to a clean mixing bowl, measure and add **3/4 cup coconut milk, 1/4 cup sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla, and 1 pinch of salt.**

whisk + thicken + fold

In a separate bowl, whisk **1/4 cup of water** with **1 tablespoon arrowroot powder** and **1 teaspoon tapioca powder**. This mixture is called a "slurry!" It will help thicken the custard. Add the slurry to the coconut milk bowl and mix. Then gently fold in 1 cup of **blueberries**.

spoon + bake + drizzle

Spoon about 1 tablespoon of the pie custard into each mini pie crust in your muffin pan. If there is any batter left over, divide it equally among all the muffin pan wells. Bake in your preheated oven until the custard is set, about 15 to 20 minutes. Drizzle some **Easy Peasy Lemon Drizzle** over the pies before serving! "Se on herkullista" (Say ohn HAIR-kul-lees-tuh) or "It's delicious" in Finnish!

Featured Ingredient: Blueberries!

Hi! I'm Blueberry!

"Have you heard the saying, "as American as apple pie?" Well, with no offense to the apple—which is certainly a fine fruit—we blueberries think that classic saying should read, "as American as blueberry pie." Blueberries are one of the few fruits native to North America, and apples aren't (unless you count Pacific crabapples). And don't worry about our powdery coating. It's called epicuticular wax (but you can call it "bloom"), and it protects our skin. I guess you could say we bloom where we're planted!"

History

Blueberries are a genuinely natural blue food due to a pigment called anthocyanin. Native Americans used

blueberries to make dye for textiles and baskets, and colonists made paint out of blueberries by boiling them in milk.

Blueberries have impacted the culture, cuisine, and even survival of Americans for centuries. From the times of the earliest indigenous people to the present day, blueberries have been a valued food staple. They've provided enjoyment during times of abundance and have held starvation at bay during times of scarcity.

In the 1860s, blueberries were gathered, packaged, and sent to Union troops during the Civil War.

The Shakers made the traditional blue paint used in their homes from blueberry skins, sage blossoms, indigo, and milk.

American poet, Robert Frost, wrote a poem called "Blueberries" that may have been inspired by his youth picking or eating blueberries.

Maine is the leading wild blueberry producer in the United States, and Oregon produces the most cultivated blueberries.

How official are blueberries? Consider these official state foods: Maine's state fruit is the wild blueberry, and their state dessert is Maine blueberry pie; Minnesota's state muffin is the blueberry muffin; New Jersey's state fruit is the Northern highbush blueberry; and North Carolina's state berry is the blueberry. July is National Blueberry Month because it is the peak of the harvest season.

Anatomy

Blueberry plants are woody shrubs. There are lowbush (or wild) and highbush (or cultivated) varieties. Canada grows the most lowbush blueberries in the world, and the United States produces about 40 percent of the highbush variety.

Native Americans once called blueberries "star berries" because the five points of blueberry blossoms make a star shape.

Blueberry plants can be grown in a large container (at least 2 feet deep and wide) if grown in acidic soil with good drainage. Plant them in the Spring and put the container in a sunny spot. They do not produce berries in the first year. It may take about five years for a full harvest.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Blueberries turn from reddish-purple to a deep blue when they are ripe. Choose berries that are blue, plump, dry, and somewhat firm. Avoid blueberries that are white or green as they are far from mature. If there are stains on the container, some of the berries may be bruised. They may have a light dusting of grayish powder (or bloom) on their skin, which is normal.

Do not wash your blueberries before freezing, storing, or eating them. However, you will want to sort through the berries and remove any that are wrinkled or covered in a white fuzzy mold, so they do not spoil the rest. Refrigerate your blueberries with good air circulation and plan to eat them within a week if possible.

If you stir some fresh blueberries into your muffin batter, you will have the most popular muffin flavor in the United States. They are also delicious in salads and breakfast cereal, especially oatmeal, juice, pies, jams and jellies, sauces, and syrup. Dried blueberries are also good in cereals and batters.

North American indigenous people used blueberries to make "pemmican," a high-energy food consisting of

dried meat, often game meat, dried berries, and tallow (rendered animal fat). They would pack it for sustenance on long journeys. European fur traders and explorers adopted it for their travels. Pemmican is still eaten today.

Blueberries have been valued as a highly nutritional food and for their medicinal properties and even for non-food uses such as making paints and dyes.

Nutrition

Blueberries contain more antioxidants than most other fruits or vegetables and may help prevent damage caused by cancer, heart disease, and Alzheimer's. In addition, the anthocyanin present in blueberries is good for eyesight.

Blueberries are a great source of many essential nutrients such as vitamin C, manganese, potassium, iron, and many others.

The calories in blueberries amount to only 80 per cup.

Blueberry juice had medicinal value for Native Americans and was used to treat persistent coughs and other illnesses.