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Fresh Pear Pie with Dried Cherries and Brown Sugar Streusel

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Fresh Pear Pie with Dried Cherries and Brown Sugar Streusel (by Nicole Rees)

Kim Burrows

Fifth Place, 2011 Moraga Pear and Wine Festival

For the streusel:

4-1/2 oz (1cup) unbleached all-purpose flour

1/2 cup old-fashioned rolled oats 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar

? tsp table salt 4 oz unsalted butter

For the filling:

3 lb ripe Anjou or Bartlett pears (5 or 6 medium), peel, cored, but lengthwise into 8 wedges, then crosswise into 1/2 inch slices

1 1/2 Tbs fresh lemon juice 2/3 cup granulated sugar

? tsp table salt ? tsp ground cinnamon

1/8 tsp freshly grated nutmeg ? cup dried tart cherries, coarsely chopped

1 1/8 oz (1/4 cup) unbleached all-purpose flour

1 blind-baked All-Butter Piecrust

Position a rack in the center of the oven, set a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet on the rack and heat the oven to 350 degrees.

Streusel: In a medium bowl, combine the flour, oats, sugar and salt. Using your fingers, blend the butter into the flour mixture. The mixture will be moist. Set aside

Filling: In a large bowl, toss the pears with the lemon juice. In a small bowl, whisk the sugar, flour, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. Add the sugar mixture to the pears and toss well to combine. Stir in the cherries. Mound the filling into the piecrust. Sprinkle the streusel topping over the pear mixture, pressing the streusel between your fingers into small lumps as you sprinkle. Put the pie on the heated baking sheet and bake until the pastry is golden brown and the filling is bubbly and thickened at the edges, 55 to 65 minutes. Rotate the pie halfway through baking, and if the pastry or the streusel browns before the filling has thickened, loosely cover the top or edges of the pie as needed with a pie shield or a sheet of aluminum foil. Transfer to a rack and cool completely before serving. The pie can be stored at room temperature for up to 2 days.

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