



National Senior Citizens Day Family Dinner

Family favorites, shared
stories, and sweet memories

A FIVE-RECIPE NATIONAL SENIOR CITIZENS DAY COOKBOOK

MEALBAKE COLLECTION | AUGUST 21, 2026



National Senior Citizens Day Family Dinner

— Family favorites, shared stories, and sweet memories —

THE COLLECTION

A family dinner for sharing stories

Honor older loved ones around a relaxed table with tender pot roast, bright green beans, and warm honey-butter rolls made for passing and sharing. Serve rustic apple pandowdy warm, keep the butterscotch pie chilled, and choose one dessert or offer both as stories linger after dinner.

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[VIEW COLLECTION ONLINE](#)

COLLECTION NOTES

Begin the day before

Chill the butterscotch pie overnight and braise the pot roast ahead so both are settled and easy to serve.

Stage the warm dishes

Shape the rolls while the roast reheats, then bake them shortly before dinner for a soft, warm bread basket.

Finish with contrast

Cook the green beans near serving and warm the apple pandowdy later, while the butterscotch pie stays chilled.



THE FAMILY CENTERPIECE

Sunday Pot Roast with Silky Onion Gravy

A fork-tender chuck roast braised with carrots and sweet onions, then served with a smooth, savory onion gravy made from the pan juices.

INGREDIENTS

METHOD

VIEW ONLINE

ACTIVE

4 hr

CHILL

0 min

TOTAL

4 hr

SERVES

8

LEVEL

Medium

Minimum elapsed time shown; cooling and setup may vary.

Sunday Pot Roast

SHOPPING LIST

- 4 lb Boneless Beef Chuck Roast
- 2 tsp Kosher Salt
- 1 tsp Black Pepper
- 3 tbsp All-Purpose Flour
- 2 tbsp Vegetable Oil
- 3 large Yellow Onions cut into thin wedges
- 4 cloves Garlic minced
- 1 tbsp Tomato Paste
- 1 cup Dry Red Wine
- 3 cups Low-Sodium Beef Broth
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire Sauce
- 6 sprigs Fresh Thyme
- 2 Bay Leaves
- 1 1/2 lb Carrots peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 tbsp Unsalted Butter softened

WHY IT WORKS

A slow-braised pot roast has a way of bringing everyone to the table before it is even carved. This version pairs well-marbled chuck roast with carrots and plenty of onions, which soften into the cooking liquid and give the gravy its gentle sweetness.

The dependable method is built around a thorough sear and a covered oven braise. Low, steady heat melts the roast's connective tissue while keeping the vegetables intact. There is no need for elaborate technique; the important cues are deep browning at the start and meat that yields easily to a fork at the end.

Pot roast is especially useful for a relaxed multigenerational dinner because it waits well. Cook it a day ahead, chill the meat in its liquid, and remove the solidified fat before reheating. The flavor deepens overnight, and the final gravy comes together in minutes.

Bring the whole roast to the table on a warm platter, surrounded by carrots and spooned with glossy onion gravy. Cloverleaf rolls and green beans make natural partners, while a nostalgic apple or butterscotch dessert completes the familiar Sunday-supper feeling.

KITCHEN NOTES

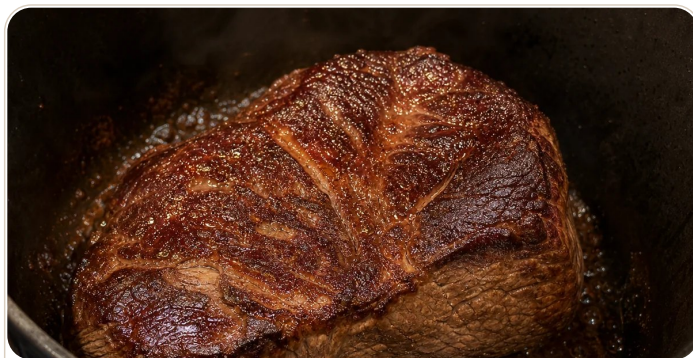
- For make-ahead service, cool and refrigerate the roast in its braising liquid for up to 2 days. Lift off the chilled fat, then reheat gently before finishing the gravy.
- If you prefer not to use wine, replace it with an equal amount of additional beef broth and add 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar with the Worcestershire sauce.
- Keep the braising liquid at a gentle simmer rather than a boil so the beef becomes tender without turning dry.

Sunday Pot Roast



1

Heat the oven to 325°F. Pat the roast dry, then season it all over with the salt and pepper. Dust the meat with 1 tablespoon of the flour and shake off any excess.



2

Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Sear the roast until deeply browned, 4 to 5 minutes per broad side and about 2 minutes on the edges. Transfer it to a plate.



3

Reduce the heat to medium. Add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and golden at the edges, 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in the garlic and tomato paste and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.



4

Pour in the wine and scrape up the browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Simmer until the wine is reduced by about half, 4 to 5 minutes, then stir in the broth and Worcestershire sauce.

Sunday Pot Roast



5

Return the roast and any collected juices to the pot. Add the thyme and bay leaves, bring the liquid to a gentle simmer, then cover and braise in the oven for 2 hours.



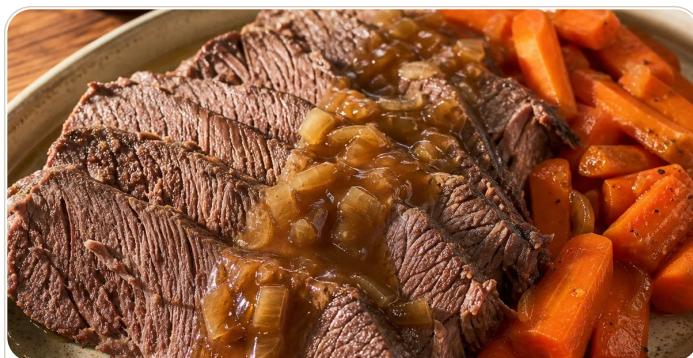
6

Nestle the carrots around the roast, cover again, and continue braising until the carrots are tender and a fork twists easily in the beef, 45 to 60 minutes. Transfer the roast and carrots to a warm platter and tent loosely with foil.



7

Discard the thyme stems and bay leaves. Skim excess fat from the braising liquid, then blend the onions and liquid with an immersion blender until smooth. Mix the butter with the remaining 2 tablespoons flour, whisk the paste into the simmering gravy a little at a time, and cook until glossy and thickened, 3 to 5 minutes.



8

Slice the roast across the grain or pull it into large serving pieces. Taste the gravy and adjust the seasoning, then spoon some over the beef and carrots and serve the rest at the table.



THE BRIGHT VEGETABLE

Skillet Green Beans with Mushrooms and Buttered Crumbs

Fresh green beans and browned mushrooms finished with thyme, lemon, and crisp buttered breadcrumbs for a lighter take on a familiar family side.

[INGREDIENTS](#)[METHOD](#)[VIEW ONLINE](#)

ACTIVE
40 min

CHILL
0 min

TOTAL
40 min

SERVES
8

LEVEL
Easy

Minimum elapsed time shown; cooling and setup may vary.

Green Beans with Mushroom Crumbs

SHOPPING LIST

- 2 pounds Fresh Green Beans, trimmed
- 1/2 cup Water
- 1 1/4 teaspoons Kosher Salt
- 3 tablespoons Unsalted Butter
- 3/4 cup Panko Breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup Finely Grated Parmesan
- 2 tablespoons Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
- 12 ounces Cremini Mushrooms, sliced
- 1 large Shallot, finely chopped
- 2 cloves Garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon Fresh Thyme Leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon Black Pepper
- 1 teaspoon Lemon Zest
- 1 tablespoon Fresh Lemon Juice

WHY IT WORKS

This skillet side keeps the familiar green bean-and-mushroom pairing of a classic casserole while leaving the canned soup behind. Fresh beans stay colorful and tender-crisp, and deeply browned mushrooms provide the savory flavor expected at a family dinner.

Cooking the green beans briefly in the skillet with a small amount of water removes the need for a separate pot. Once the water evaporates, the same pan is ready for the mushrooms, shallot, and thyme, which pick up every flavorful browned bit.

Buttered panko crumbs add the crisp finish that baked casseroles usually get from fried onions. A little lemon zest and juice sharpen the vegetables without making the side taste overtly citrusy, so it still sits comfortably beside pot roast, gravy, and warm rolls.

The crumbs can be toasted a day ahead and kept covered at room temperature. Cook the vegetables shortly before dinner, then scatter the crumbs on only at serving time so every spoonful has a crisp contrast.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Choose slender, firm green beans so they cook evenly and retain a pleasant snap.
- Do not crowd the mushrooms in a small pan; use a 12-inch skillet so they brown instead of steam.
- Toast the crumbs up to one day ahead and keep them airtight at room temperature.

Green Beans with Mushroom Crumbs



1

Place the green beans, water, and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a large skillet. Cover and cook over medium-high heat for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring once, until the beans are bright green and just tender.



2

Uncover and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until the remaining water evaporates. Transfer the green beans to a large plate and wipe the skillet dry.



3

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in the skillet over medium heat. Add the panko and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring often, until evenly golden and crisp.



4

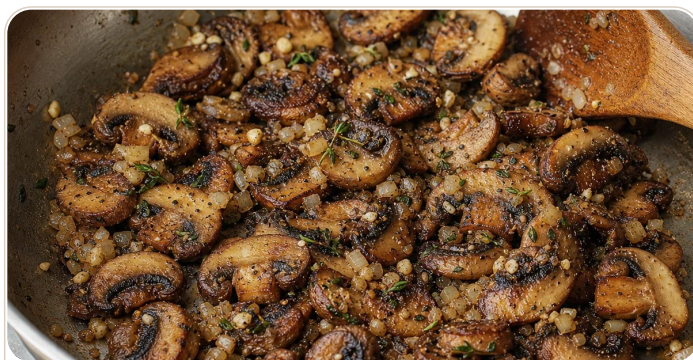
Transfer the toasted panko to a bowl. Stir in the Parmesan and lemon zest, then set the crumbs aside.

Green Beans with Mushroom Crumbs



5

Heat the olive oil and remaining 2 tablespoons butter in the skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms in an even layer and cook without stirring for 3 minutes.



6

Stir the mushrooms and continue cooking for 4 to 5 minutes, until well browned and their liquid has evaporated. Add the shallot, garlic, thyme, black pepper, and remaining 3/4 teaspoon salt; cook for 2 minutes, until fragrant.



7

Return the green beans to the skillet and toss with the mushroom mixture for 2 to 3 minutes, until hot and tender-crisp. Stir in the lemon juice and taste for seasoning.



8

Transfer the green beans and mushrooms to a warm serving dish. Scatter the buttered crumbs over the top just before serving.



THE PASS-AROUND BREAD

Honey Butter Buttermilk Cloverleaf Rolls

Soft, pull-apart buttermilk rolls baked in a muffin tin and brushed with warm honey butter. Their tender crumb and lightly burnished tops make them a welcoming homemade bread for a traditional family dinner.

INGREDIENTS

METHOD

VIEW ONLINE

ACTIVE
53 min

CHILL
1 hr 35 min

TOTAL
2 hr 28 min

SERVES
12

LEVEL
Medium

Minimum elapsed time shown; cooling and setup may vary.

Buttermilk Cloverleaf Rolls

SHOPPING LIST

- 1 1/4 cups Whole Buttermilk
- 3 tablespoons Honey
- 2 1/4 teaspoons Active Dry Yeast
- 1 Large Egg
- 5 tablespoons Unsalted Butter, Melted and Cooled
- 4 cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Fine Sea Salt
- 1 tablespoon Unsalted Butter, Softened
- 1 tablespoon Honey for the Glaze
- 1 tablespoon Unsalted Butter for the Glaze, Melted

WHY IT WORKS

Cloverleaf rolls turn a simple enriched dough into a basket of bread that feels made for passing around the table. Three small dough balls nestle into each muffin cup, creating a handsome top and soft sections that pull apart easily.

Buttermilk gives these rolls a gentle tang and a tender crumb without making them heavy. A modest amount of honey rounds out the dough, while the final honey-butter glaze adds shine and just enough sweetness to complement a savory dinner.

These rolls are especially useful beside pot roast because their feathery interiors catch every bit of gravy. Their restrained flavor also sits comfortably alongside green beans and leaves room for nostalgic desserts at the end of the meal.

Serve the rolls warm in a cloth-lined basket for a relaxed, multigenerational supper. Leftovers stay soft when wrapped well and can be reheated briefly, making them a practical bread to bake earlier in the day.

KITCHEN NOTES

- If the kitchen is cool, let the covered dough rise in an unheated oven with only the oven light switched on.
- For evenly sized rolls, weigh the dough and divide the total weight by 36 before shaping.
- Reheat wrapped rolls in a 300°F oven for about 8 minutes, then brush with a little extra butter if desired.

Buttermilk Cloverleaf Rolls



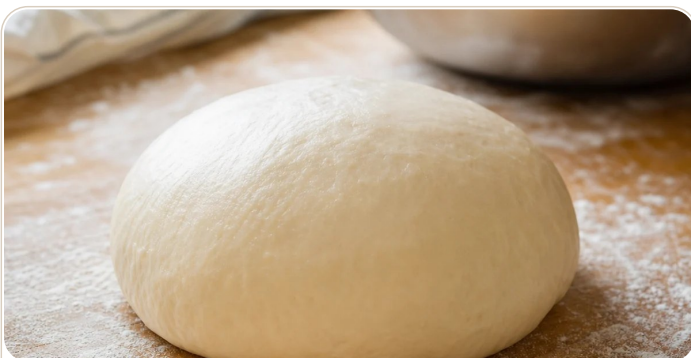
1

Warm the buttermilk in a small saucepan over low heat until it reaches 105-110°F; it may look slightly separated, which is normal. Pour it into a large mixing bowl and stir in 2 tablespoons of the honey and the yeast. Let stand for 5-10 minutes, until a creamy foam forms on the surface.



2

Whisk the egg and 4 tablespoons of the melted butter into the yeast mixture. Add 3 1/2 cups of the flour and the salt, then stir with a sturdy spoon until a shaggy, moist dough forms.



3

Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes, adding only enough of the remaining flour to keep it from sticking. The finished dough should feel supple and slightly tacky and spring back slowly when pressed.



4

Grease a clean bowl with the softened butter. Shape the dough into a ball, turn it in the bowl to coat, cover, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place for 60-75 minutes, until doubled in size.

Buttermilk Cloverleaf Rolls



5

Brush a standard 12-cup muffin tin with some of the remaining 1 tablespoon melted butter. Gently deflate the risen dough and divide it into 36 equal pieces, about 1 ounce each. Roll each piece against the work surface under a cupped hand to form a smooth ball.



6

Place three dough balls, seam sides down, in each muffin cup. Cover the pan loosely and let the rolls rise for 35-45 minutes, until puffy and the dough crowns just above the rims. During the last 15 minutes, heat the oven to 375°F.



7

Brush the risen rolls lightly with the rest of the reserved melted butter. Bake for 17-19 minutes, rotating the pan halfway through, until the tops are deep golden and the center of a roll registers about 190°F.



8

Stir the glaze honey and melted butter together. Immediately brush the hot rolls with the honey butter, allowing it to settle into the cloverleaf seams.



9

Cool in the pan for 5 minutes, then loosen the edges with a thin knife and transfer the rolls to a basket or rack. Serve warm, or cool completely before wrapping for later reheating.



THE WARM FRUIT DESSERT

Old-Fashioned Apple Pandowdy with Cinnamon Cream

Tender spiced apples bake beneath a flaky patchwork crust that is pressed into the bubbling juices, then served warm with softly whipped cinnamon cream.

[INGREDIENTS](#)[METHOD](#)[VIEW ONLINE](#)

ACTIVE

1 hr 10 min

CHILL

55 min

TOTAL

2 hr 5 min

SERVES

8

LEVEL

Medium

Minimum elapsed time shown; cooling and setup may vary.

Old-Fashioned Apple Pandowdy

SHOPPING LIST

- 1 1/2 cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 tablespoon Granulated Sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher Salt
- 10 tablespoons Unsalted Butter, Cold and Cubed
- 4 tablespoons Ice Water
- 1 Large Egg, Beaten
- 1 tablespoon Coarse Sugar
- 2 pounds Granny Smith Apples, Peeled, Cored, and Sliced
- 1 1/2 pounds Honeycrisp Apples, Peeled, Cored, and Sliced
- 2/3 cup Packed Light Brown Sugar
- 3 tablespoons All-Purpose Flour
- 2 tablespoons Fresh Lemon Juice
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Ground Cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon Ground Nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon Kosher Salt
- 2 tablespoons Unsalted Butter, Cut into Small Pieces
- 3/4 cup Heavy Cream, Cold
- 1 tablespoon Confectioners' Sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon Ground Cinnamon

WHY IT WORKS

Apple pandowdy is a deep-dish fruit dessert with a pastry top that is deliberately broken and pressed into the bubbling juices near the end of baking. The rustic finish lets some pieces stay crisp while others soak up the caramelized apple syrup.

A mix of firm tart and sweet apples gives the filling both structure and rounded flavor. Brown sugar, lemon, cinnamon, and a restrained amount of nutmeg support the fruit without turning the dessert cloying after a generous family dinner.

The pastry is cut into irregular squares and diamonds, so there is no need to wrestle a single sheet over the baking dish. Chilling the pieces before assembly keeps their butter cold and produces distinct, flaky layers.

Serve the pandowdy warm rather than piping hot, after the juices have had time to thicken. Softly whipped cinnamon cream melts gently over each spoonful and makes an inviting finish for a multigenerational table.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Slice the apples about 1/4 inch thick so they soften evenly without dissolving into sauce.
- Assemble the pastry pieces and apple filling separately up to 8 hours ahead; refrigerate both and top the fruit just before baking.
- Reheat leftover pandowdy uncovered at 325°F for 15 to 20 minutes to refresh the pastry. Whip the cream shortly before serving.

Old-Fashioned Apple Pandowdy



1

Whisk 1 1/2 cups flour, granulated sugar, and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a bowl. Cut in the cold cubed butter until flat pieces no larger than peas remain. Stir in 3 tablespoons ice water, adding the final tablespoon only if needed, until the dough holds together when squeezed.



2

Pat the dough into a disk, wrap, and chill for 30 minutes. Roll it on a lightly floured surface to a rough 12-inch square, cut it into irregular 2- to 3-inch squares and diamonds, transfer the pieces to a parchment-lined pan, and chill while the oven heats.



3

Heat the oven to 400°F with a rack in the lower third. Butter a 2 1/2- to 3-quart baking dish. Toss both apples with the brown sugar, 3 tablespoons flour, lemon juice, vanilla, 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon, nutmeg, and 1/4 teaspoon salt until evenly coated.



4

Spread the apples in the baking dish and dot them with 2 tablespoons butter. Overlap the chilled pastry pieces loosely over the fruit, leaving a few small gaps for steam. Brush with beaten egg and sprinkle with coarse sugar.

Old-Fashioned Apple Pandowdy



5

Bake for 30 minutes, until the pastry is pale golden and the apple juices are bubbling around the edges. Remove the dish from the oven and reduce the temperature to 350°F.



6

Use the back of a spoon to press several pastry pieces gently into the bubbling juices, breaking a few edges while leaving other pieces raised and crisp. Spoon a little juice over the dry patches without submerging the entire crust.



7

Return the dish to the oven and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until the pastry is deep golden, the juices bubble near the center, and a thin knife slides easily into the apples. Rest on a rack for 25 minutes so the filling thickens.



8

Whip the cold cream with confectioners' sugar and 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon to soft, drooping peaks. Spoon the warm pandowdy into shallow bowls, including both syrup-soaked and crisp pastry in each serving, and finish with cinnamon cream.



THE CHILLED FINALE

Butterscotch Pudding Pie with Toasted Meringue

A flaky blind-baked crust holds silky brown sugar butterscotch pudding beneath billowy Swiss meringue toasted until golden.

[INGREDIENTS](#)[METHOD](#)[VIEW ONLINE](#)

ACTIVE
55 min

CHILL
6 hr 45 min

TOTAL
7 hr 40 min

SERVES
8

LEVEL
Hard

Minimum elapsed time shown; cooling and setup may vary.

Butterscotch Pudding Pie

SHOPPING LIST

- 1 1/4 cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon Granulated Sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher Salt
- 8 tablespoons Unsalted Butter, Cold and Cubed
- 3 tablespoons Ice Water
- 3/4 cup Dark Brown Sugar, Packed
- 1/4 cup Cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher Salt
- 2 cups Whole Milk
- 1/2 cup Heavy Cream
- 4 Large Egg Yolks
- 4 tablespoons Unsalted Butter
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- 4 Large Egg Whites
- 3/4 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon Cream of Tartar
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1/8 teaspoon Kosher Salt

WHY IT WORKS

This pie builds butterscotch flavor from dark brown sugar, browned butter, vanilla, and a measured pinch of salt rather than a boxed mix. The result is a custard with a deep caramel character that remains smooth and sliceable when chilled.

Fully blind-baking the pastry protects its crisp layers beneath the pudding. Docking only after the pie weights come out prevents large bubbles while avoiding the leaks that can happen when raw pastry is pierced too early.

A cooked Swiss meringue gives the pie a soft, glossy crown that is more stable than an uncooked topping. Heating the whites and sugar together dissolves the crystals and makes the finished foam dependable enough for clean wedges.

The pie needs a complete chill before slicing, so it is well suited to a family dinner planned a day ahead. Serve it cool but not ice-cold, when the butterscotch aroma is most noticeable and the crust still has a delicate snap.

KITCHEN NOTES

- Keep the pastry cold at every stage; if it softens while crimping, refrigerate the shaped crust for 10 minutes before freezing.
- Whisk the pudding into the corners of the saucepan and maintain a full, slow bubble for 1 minute so the cornstarch cooks completely.
- The assembled pie is best made 6 to 24 hours ahead. Store it uncovered or beneath a high pie dome so condensation does not spot the meringue.

Butterscotch Pudding Pie



1

Whisk 1 1/4 cups flour, 1 teaspoon sugar, and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Cut in the cold cubed butter until flat pea-size pieces remain. Stir in 2 tablespoons ice water, adding the final tablespoon only if needed, until the dough holds together when squeezed.



2

Shape the dough into a disk, wrap, and chill for 30 minutes. Roll it into a 12-inch round, fit it into a 9-inch pie plate, trim to a 1-inch overhang, fold the edge under, and crimp. Freeze for 15 minutes while the oven heats to 400°F.



3

Line the crust with parchment and fill with pie weights. Bake for 18 minutes, remove the weights, prick any puffed areas, and bake 10 to 12 minutes more, until deep golden and dry. Cool completely on a rack.



4

Whisk the brown sugar, cornstarch, and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a saucepan. Gradually whisk in the milk, cream, and egg yolks. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until large bubbles break the surface, then boil for 1 minute.

Butterscotch Pudding Pie



5

Meanwhile, brown 4 tablespoons butter in a small skillet until the milk solids are amber and nutty. Remove the pudding from the heat, whisk in the browned butter and 2 teaspoons vanilla, then pass it through a fine sieve into the cooled crust. Press parchment directly on the surface.



6

Combine the egg whites, 3/4 cup granulated sugar, cream of tartar, and 1/8 teaspoon salt in a heatproof mixer bowl over gently simmering water. Whisk constantly until the sugar dissolves and the mixture reaches 160°F, 5 to 7 minutes.



7

Whip the warm white mixture at high speed until glossy, stiff peaks form and the bowl is nearly cool, 6 to 8 minutes. Beat in 1 teaspoon vanilla. Remove the parchment from the warm pudding and spread the meringue to the crust edge, sealing it completely and forming broad swirls.



8

Toast the meringue evenly with a kitchen torch, or broil 6 inches from the heat for 1 to 2 minutes while watching constantly. Cool the pie for 1 hour, then refrigerate uncovered for at least 5 hours. Slice with a hot dry knife, wiping it between cuts.