

# Cooking Corner

Tips To Help You

## Pumpkin Or Sweet Potato? Tips And Topping To Make The Best Pie

(NAPSA)—'Tis the season for pie making. This recipe for Sweet Potato Pie features a stunning fig and toasted pecan topping that works equally well on pumpkin pie. Whether you prefer pumpkin or lean toward sweet potato, these baking tips will reward you with pie perfection.

Luscious, sweet, moist, dark Mission or golden California Calimyrna figs are simmered in brandy and maple syrup and swirled with toasted pecans. Spooned over a silky-smooth sweet potato filling, this showy, classic pie is even more appealing when you realize it started with a refrigerated pie crust.

For more recipes and fig tips, visit Valley Fig Growers at [www.valleyfig.com](http://www.valleyfig.com).

### Perfect Pie Tips

- For optimum baking results, use a glass or dull-metal pie pan. Avoid shiny metal or disposable aluminum pans, which reflect heat and prevent crusts from browning. Dark pans may cause crusts to brown too much.

- To keep baked edges from getting too brown, cover the edges with foil after the first 15 minutes of baking. Use a 12-inch-square piece of foil. Cut out a 7-inch circle from the center, and gently fold the foil "ring" around the crust's edge. Be careful: The pie will be hot!

- Use a hot oven temperature during the first 15 minutes of baking.

- Cool the pie on a wire rack to help prevent a soggy bottom. The rack helps air circulate.



**Fig and toasted pecan topping takes classic sweet potato pie to new heights.**

### Sweet Potato Pie With Fig And Pecan Topping

#### Pie:

- 1 refrigerated pie crust ( $\frac{1}{2}$  of 15-oz. package)
- 15 ounces canned sweet potatoes, packed in light syrup
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup whipping cream

#### Topping:

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup stemmed, chopped Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs

- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon brandy or water
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped, toasted pecans

Preheat oven to 450°F. Prepare one 9-inch pie crust according to package directions for filled pie; do not bake.

Drain sweet potatoes; mash or whirl in food processor until smooth (potatoes should measure 1½ cups). In medium bowl, whisk together sweet potatoes, brown sugar, spice and salt. Whisk in eggs, one at a time, and cream. Pour filling into crust.

Bake pie 15 minutes; reduce heat to 350°, shield edge of pie with foil to prevent over-browning, and continue baking for 25 to 30 minutes or until center moves slightly when shaken. Remove pie to wire rack to cool.

For topping, in small saucepan, stir butter and brown sugar over medium heat until melted. Stir in figs, maple syrup and brandy. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring constantly, 2 minutes or until reduced to a thick, glossy syrup. Remove from heat and stir in pecans. Spoon evenly over warm pie.

Cool. Chill for up to 8 hours before serving. Makes 8 servings.