

# ◁ Beetle Pie

PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES | YIELD: 8 SERVINGS (1 PIE)

The colors and textures of this pie are inspired by one of my all-time favorite films, *Beetlejuice*. I wanted the look of it alone to somehow remind you of Tim Burton and his marvelous, memorable goth-com. The brilliant green color of the homemade pistachio pudding and the crunchy chocolate crust evoke the corpse-fed grass and rich soil of a graveyard, while the seedy and sweet blackberry jam mimics the texture of blood and bugs. You can store the pie, covered, in the refrigerator for up to a week, but it is best served within 12 to 24 hours. Rich, thick, and creepily delicious, Beetle Pie is a perfect dessert for any occasion for pistachio lovers—but we of course recommend it for Halloween.

## DEADLY INGREDIENTS

### CRUST

35 chocolate cookie wafers

1/4 cup (1/2 stick or 55 g) salted butter, melted and cooled to room temperature

### FILLING

1/4 cup (92 g) roasted salted shelled pistachios

2/3 cup (133 g) raw sugar, divided

2 tablespoons water

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups (475 ml) whole milk

2 large egg yolks

2 tablespoons cornstarch

pinch of salt

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

Green food coloring or food dye

### BLACKBERRY JAM

1 cup (145 g) fresh blackberries

2 cups (475 ml) water

1 cup (200 g) raw cane sugar

### TOPPING

1 cup (40 g) whipped topping, preferably Cool Whip

6 to 8 whole fresh blackberries

## TO MAKE IT

- 1. To make the crust:** Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
- Place the cookie wafers into a food processor and pulse until the crumbs are about the size of peas. Add the melted butter and continue to process until the consistency is like coffee grounds.
- Transfer the crumbs to a 9-inch (23 cm) pie plate. Use a cup or your hands to firmly press the crumbs

evenly into the bottom and sides of the pan. Bake until fragrant, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove and cool completely before filling.

- 4. To make the filling:** Place the pistachios into the food processor. Add 1/3 cup (67 g) of the sugar. Pulse until the nuts and sugar are as close to the consistency of powder as you can get. Add the water and pulse until the mixture becomes a paste.
- In a medium saucepan, whisk together the pistachio paste, vanilla extract, and milk over medium heat until the mixture just starts to boil slightly. Then remove it from the heat.
- In a separate mixing bowl, whisk together the remaining 1/3 cup (66 g) sugar, the egg yolks, cornstarch, and salt. Continue whisking until you have a smooth yellow paste. Add the egg mixture to the milk mixture and return to medium heat, whisking frequently until the pudding starts to boil. Whisk for another 30 to 60 seconds, until the pudding thickens fully, then remove from the heat.
- Stir in the butter until it is melted and blended with the pudding. Add 2 to 3 drops of green food coloring or green food dye to get a brilliant green color. Transfer the pudding to a container with a lid and place in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 hours, or until cold.
- 8. To make the blackberry jam:** Place the fresh blackberries, water, and sugar into a medium saucepan. Heat on medium for approximately 20 minutes, stirring frequently and using a whisk to break up the berries. Continue to heat and stir until a medium-thick syrup has formed. Remove from the heat.
- Using a spatula, pour the cold pudding into the pie crust. Fill the crust to about 2 inches (5 cm) below the top of the crust edge. Use the spatula to make sure the mixture is spread evenly.
- Using another spatula, dab a large helping of jam (about the diameter of a DVD and 1/4 inch or 5 mm thick) into the center of the pie. Using the same spatula, drip more jam in random places around the edges and other areas of the pie (think blood spatter).
- Place the whipped topping directly in the center of the pie. Use a spatula to create peaks and valleys in the whipped topping so that it resembles a cloud. Finish the dessert by sticking the whole blackberries in the whipped topping in random places to resemble bugs.
- Serve the pie on a white plate and garnish with small plastic beetles and/or spiders dipped in the blackberry jam. Refrigerate the plates with the bugs and pie on them for an hour before serving.