Atlantic Beach Pie

You may wonder what pie has to do with Easter. Well, I'll tell you. This year Easter happens to fall on one our family members' birthday and this is his favorite dessert and wants that for his birthday. Bam! Easter dessert.

We have a great customer to thank for introducing us to this most delicious thing in the world. We had never hear of it, being Californians for generations, but it has taken a regular place on our tables now! I present you with Atlantic Beach Pie. The best, most wonderful thing in the world. Oh, and this version, with a little tweaking on my part,we must give credit to Bill Smith at food52.com.

For the crust:

6 ozs., or 60 pieces of Ritz crackers
4 ozs. softened butter
3 tbsp. granulated sugar

For the Topping:

1 ¼ cups heavy whipping cream
2 tbsp. granulated sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
kosher salt

Preheat oven to 350º Fahrenheit. Crush the crackers finely, but not to dust. You can use a food processor or your hands. Add the sugar, then knead in the butter until the crumbs hold together like a dough. I didn't read my own instructions, so I melted the butter - it turned out fine. So, you choose. Press into an 8" pie pan. Here again, I didn't follow that instruction. I defy you to find an 8" pie pan nowadays that isn't an ancient Marie Callendar's tin that you have hoarded for 25 years. (I didn't think it would make a good photo...) Anyway, I used a 9" pyrex pie pan and it was fine. Using the bottom of a glass or a rounded metal measuring cup helps in getting it all pressed evenly. Chill for 15 minutes, then bake for 18 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown. Again, I paid no attention to the instructions and popped it right into the oven. It was fine - and took 20 minutes.

While the crust is cooling (it doesn't need to be cold), beat the egg yolks into the sweetened condensed milk, then beat in the citrus juice. It is important to completely combine these ingredients. Pour into the shell and bake for 16 minutes until the filling has set. I did that part just as it said! It was fine. Cool completely.

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Whip the heavy cream with the sugar and vanilla to soft peaks. Spread evenly over pie, then sprinkle Kosher salt lightly over the cream. (Don't forget the salt - it makes a difference!)

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