

Thanksgiving Leftovers Dinner Pies: Ken's Guidelines and Gravy Recipe

The following recipe guidelines will help you create your own savory dinner pies - including pot pies and hand pies - from your Thanksgiving leftovers. (To find the video I made to accompany these guidelines, go to [youtube.com/kenhaedrich1](https://www.youtube.com/kenhaedrich1)). The title of the video is *How to Make Savory Dinner Pies with Thanksgiving Leftovers*.)

Pot Pies - You can make pot pies with virtually any combination of leftover vegetables and meat - like chopped turkey or ham - that you have on hand. For each pot pie, moisten the vegetable/meat mixture with 2 to 4 tablespoons gravy, and spoon an additional 2 to 4 tablespoons gravy in the bottom of each pie shell before you add the filling.

The Shells - Use *Ken's Perfect Pie Crust Recipe*. A single crust batch will make 4 to 6 pot pie shells, depending on the size of the pans. For smaller pans, roll the dough about 6 inches in diameter. About 8 inches for a standard size pot pie pan. If you plan to use a top crust on your pot pies - instead of mashed potatoes or crumbs (see below) - you will probably have to make a second single crust batch of dough or a double crust batch. Roll the top crusts a little larger than the diameter of the pan you're using.

Mashed Potato Topped Pot Pies - This is a hybrid pot pie, a cross between a pot pie and shepherd's pie. Loosen your mashed potatoes by first warming them slightly. Add a touch more milk or stock, as needed. Spoon a generous serving of the potatoes over the filling. Sprinkle with cheese, if you like, place on a baking sheet and bake in a 375° oven for about 40 minutes.

Crumb Topped Pot Pies - A good use for any dry leftover stuffing mix and those crispy fried onions that go on everyone's green bean casserole. Put 1 cup of each in a food processor and process to make gritty crumbs. Transfer to a bowl and stir in 3 tablespoons melted unsalted butter. Mix well. Bake your pot pies with just the filling for 30 minutes, then slide them out and sprinkle on a heavy coating of these crumbs for the last 10 to 15 minutes of baking.

Hand Pies - Use *Ken's Hand Pie Dough*. Divide into 4 pieces for large hand pies, 5 or 6 pieces for smaller ones. For each hand pie, moisten up to 3/4 to 1 cup filling with 2 to 4 tablespoons of the gravy. Roll larger pieces of dough into 9-inch circles, smaller circles for smaller pies. Pile the filling neatly on half of the circle, moisten the edge, and fold over to seal. Transfer to your baking sheet. Poke several times with a fork, to vent. Glaze and bake at 375° for about 40 minutes.

Glaze - Top-crust pot pies and hand pies look more appealing when they've been glazed, which results in a rich golden brown crust. Whisk 1 egg with 1 tablespoon milk or half-and-half. Brush sparingly over pastry, not letting it puddle on the pastry or drip too much onto your sheet. (It will cause things to stick.)

Extra Gravy! - Saucy dinner pies like these absorb more sauce than you can imagine. Always try to have extra on hand that you can serve on the side. Whether I'm making turkey or chicken pot pies, you'll need plenty of gravy. I'll typically make extra. You'll find the recipe below.

Easy Chicken Gravy

This is a cinch to make and handy to have on hand when you need a quick sauce for leftover poultry. It's easy to double the recipe. Just multiply everything by 2. Leftovers freeze nicely.

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 1/4 cups chicken broth
- 1/4 cup heavy cream, half-and-half, or milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon each dried sage and thyme

Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the flour and cook, stirring, for 1 to 1 1/2 minutes. Whisk in the chicken broth about one-third at a time, whisking until smooth after each addition. Bring to a simmer and allow to thicken a bit, then stir in the cream, salt, and pepper to taste - it may need more or less, depending on the saltiness of the broth - and the herbs. Continue to simmer gently for a minute or two, then remove from the heat. Gravy always thickens as it cools and the longer it stands, so expect to thin it with additional milk or broth if you don't use it right away. Makes about 2 1/4 cups gravy.

Variation: I sometimes sauté several tablespoons each of minced onion and minced celery in the butter for 3 to 4 minutes before I add the flour, for extra flavor.

Flaky and Sturdy Hand Pie Dough

Here is the dough I like to use for our Thanksgiving leftovers hand pies. It's an excellent all-purpose hand pie dough for a variety of traditional hand pies, including empanadas, meat pies, and Cornish pasties. It has less fat than traditional pie dough, which makes it somewhat more sturdy and suitable for hand held pies. But it is still wonderfully flaky and delicious.

Ingredients

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/4" pieces
- 2 tablespoons cold vegetable shortening, in several small pieces
- 1/3 cup cold water
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar

Instructions

1. Combine the flour and salt in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse the machine several times, to mix. Remove the lid and scatter the butter and shortening over the dry ingredients. Pulse the machine briefly, 6 or 7 times, breaking the fat into pea-size bits.
2. Whisk the water, egg, and vinegar in a small bowl. Remove the lid and add the liquid to the processor. Replace lid and pulse the machine, repeatedly, just until the dough starts to clump together.
3. Stop the machine and turn the dough out onto your work surface. Shape the dough into 4, 5 or 6 equal-size balls, then flatten into 1/2-inch thick disks. Wrap the disks in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least an hour before rolling. For smaller hand pies, roll the dough into approximate 6-inch diameter circles. For larger hand pies, 8 1/2- to 9-inch circles.
4. (To make the dough by hand, mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. Cut in the butter and shortening until broken into fine bits. Whisk the water, egg, and vinegar. Stir into the flour all at once, until the dough pulls together.) Makes enough dough for 4 large or 6 smaller hand pies.

Ken's Thanksgiving Leftovers Quiche

This recipe is, by necessity, flexible in nature in order to accommodate a wide range of possible variations. If you watched my video about Thanksgiving leftover dinner pies, you know that I vary not only the type of cheese I put in the mashed potato topping, but also the vegetables we use on the bottom layer. I highly recommend using either a deep-dish pie pan or a 2-inch deep quiche pan to make this, so there is plenty of room for your leftovers.

Ken's Perfect Pie Crust or other favorite pie dough, refrigerated

Filling

2 2/3 cups leftover mashed potatoes, at room temperature
1/3 cup milk or half-and-half
1/3 cup sour cream
3 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon salt (the lesser amount if your potatoes are well salted)
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1/2 teaspoon dried ground sage or thyme
1 to 1 1/2 cups crumbled blue cheese, Cheddar cheese or some combination of cheeses (see Notes below)
2 to 3 cups leftover cooked vegetables (see Notes)

1. If you haven't already, prepare and refrigerate the pie dough. Roll the dough into a 13-inch circle and line a 9- to 9 1/2-inch deep-dish pie pan or 2-inch deep tart pan with it. If you're using the tart pan, keep the dough flush with the top of the pan. If you're using a pie pan, shape the edge into an upstanding ridge. Flute or crimp the edge, then refrigerate the shell for at least 30 minutes.

2. To prebake the pie shell, preheat the oven to 375°. Prick the bottom of the shell 4 or 5 times with a fork. Line the chilled pie shell with foil, pressing it into the pan so it fits the shell like a glove. Fill the foil at least halfway with dried beans, banking them up the sides. Place the pan on a large, rimmed baking sheet and bake on the lower oven rack for 25 minutes. Slide out the sheet, remove the foil and beans, and move the shell up to the middle rack. Bake another 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer the pan, on the sheet, to a cooling rack while you make the filling.

3. Set aside 2/3 cup of the mashed potatoes in a small bowl. Put the remaining 2 cups mashed potatoes in a large microwavable bowl. Microwave

for 30 to 45 seconds - just long enough to loosen them up so they're not stiff. Add the milk, sour cream, eggs, salt, pepper, mustard, and sage or thyme. Using an electric hand mixer - or a fast hand with a whisk - combine the ingredients until they're evenly mixed. Stir in the cheese.

4. Set the oven to 375°. Spread the reserved 2/3 cup mashed potatoes evenly over the bottom of the shell. Cover with enough leftover vegetables to fill the shell about halfway. Slowly pour the mashed potato topping over the vegetables until it almost reaches the top of the shell.

5. Bake the quiche on the center oven rack for about 40 to 50 minutes. When the quiche is done, the potato layer will puff slightly and develop cracks. If you'd like a browned top, run it under the broiler briefly, but watch it like a hawk so it doesn't burn. Transfer the quiche to a rack and cool for at least 20 to 30 minutes before serving.

Notes:

-Virtually any cheese will work in the mashed potato topping. I love blue cheese, especially when I have collards or other greens for the vegetable layer. Brussels sprouts, too. Blue cheese is quite sharp so I usually use just 1 cup. I like grated sharp Cheddar cheese when I use corn for the vegetable layer. Freshly grated Parmesan is good with most vegetables, but I tend to limit it to 1/2 cup or it can make the potato layer slightly dry. Experiment with any cheese you like.

Ken's Perfect Pie Crust Recipe - This is the link to my perfect food processor pie dough recipe: <https://goo.gl/c2LNrM>

The link will take you to the November 2018 issue of *Fine Cooking* magazine. I think it's the best, most recent treatment of the recipe, which is why I'm directing you there.

Could I ask you a favor?

If you enjoy these recipes, my videos, writings and/or ThePieAcademy.com, would you mind spreading the word to your cooking friends? I'd appreciate it greatly if you shared links, recipes, or anything else you find helpful or enjoyable to watch. Thanks a ton.

Ken Haedrich, dean of The Pie Academy