

# Like Lemon Meringue Pie?

Dear Folks:

We are getting so many requests from people who just must know how to keep meringue from weeping, cracking, falling etc., that I have compiled all the best hints I have collected over the years for the perfect meringues.

Evidently you all are getting close to homemade goodies too. Hooray!

One of the best ones came from one of our lovely sweet readers who made a specialty of just this very thing. She suggested that as soon as the meringue-topped pie started cooling you dip a thin knife in hot water and cut through ONLY the meringue (but NOT the pie itself) into serving pieces.

After trying this hint, I found I loved the idea of cutting through the meringue while the pie was still hot! Amazing when that knife was dipped in hot water how clean it cut through my warm meringue.

Now here's a few more hints that I have learned about meringues from famous bakers in three fabulous hotels:

Egg whites should always be room temperature before beating. And it should take a minimum of three eggs for each pie.

After they are beaten stiff but NOT dry, sprinkle one-fourth teaspoon cream of tartar and a dash of salt on top and beat slightly.

Now... add SLOWLY three

baking:

Always have your meringue touching the edges of the pie crust. This prevents shrinking, etc.

If the pie is put on the middle shelf (NOT the top) in your oven, it will brown evenly and the points or swirls on your meringue won't get burned.

When it is ALMOST as brown as you want it, if you turn off your oven and open the door SLIGHTLY, it will cool slowly, and this prevents a meringue from cracking or splitting. Don't ever set a pie where cold drafts can get to it while it's hot. It must be cooled slowly.

And most important of all (which I have saved till last, so that you will remember it):

NEVER put a meringue on a pie or use it anywhere else until you have tested it to see if the sugar is COMPLETELY DISSOLVED before cooking. The way to do this is to put some of it between two fingertips and rub them together.

Or (as I have just learned), it is even better to put a little of it on the tip of your tongue, rub it on the roof of your mouth and feel the undissolved sugar. "Chew" the meringue and you can even hear it grate between your teeth!

If you feel grains of sugar... believe it, you better keep beating some more. The grains should be completely dissolved before cooking, as this is one of the causes of "tears" on a pie.

Either your eggs weren't room temperature, or you haven't beaten 'em enough.

And that's all I've stolen from the good chefs and cooks about pie meringue!

Bless 'em all.

Heloise

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P.S. And when I asked each chef if his wife cooked pies and goodies, the answer was, "Heavens, NO! Why should she?"

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Dear Heloise:

The meal-planning "blahs" recently got me, so I embarked on a project that brightened up our mealtime.

On a leisurely evening I collected my recipe books and file. On a large sheet of paper I listed the names of interesting recipes, in what book or file where they were located, and the ingredients needed that I normally don't have on hand. This sheet of paper was hung next to my grocery list and on shopping day I would select three or four recipes to try. Specials in the grocery ads influenced my decision.

If these recipes made a hit with my family, its name and location were written on a recipe index card and placed in my recipe file.

I now have a quick reference to refer to and NO MORE BLAHS!

B.L. Ellis



DOES THIS MEAN  
I DON'T GET  
THE CAKE?



### LI'L ABNER

BUT THAT NOTE  
IS TWO PAGES  
LONG

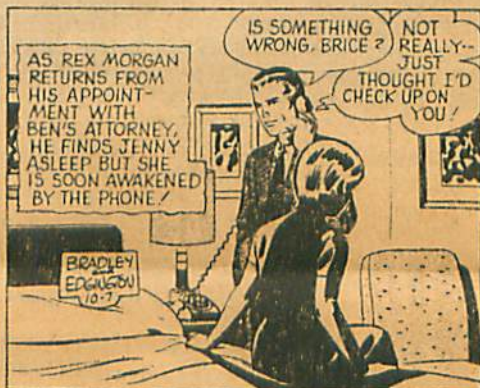


JUST PUT A  
COIN IN THE  
CANDY  
MACHINE—  
BUT  
—REMEMBER—  
NO  
SLUGS!!



### REX MORGAN

HE HAS NO FAMILY  
AND THIS IS THE  
ONLY MAIL  
HE GETS



### SNUFFY SMITH

ELVINEY'S