

## GERMAN-RUSSIAN CUSTARD KUCHEN From Carol Just

### Sweet Roll Dough:

4 C. flour

1 tsp. salt

½ C shortening\*

½ C. sugar

1 pkg yeast\*\*

3 eggs, beaten. (The eggs should be a room temperature.)

1 C warm milk, divided. (You can warm the milk in the microwave to body temperature, as if you were heating a baby bottle.)

Mix flour, salt, sugar and shortening as you would a pie crust - to a fine crumb.

Dissolve the yeast in ½ C warm (not boiling) milk. Add eggs and remaining warm milk to the yeast mixture. The liquid should get foamy as the yeast becomes active. If the yeast is not working, perhaps because the milk was not warm enough, you can add a pinch of sugar to feed it. Once the yeast has achieved the desired foaminess, it can be added to the flour mixture.

Form a “well” in the flour mixture and pour in the yeast liquid. You can mix this dough with a spoon, pastry blender or your hands. Only knead the dough enough to get all the flour moist. Do not overwork it. It should form a shiny, rounded ball. If the dough is too dry, you can add a little water or milk. Let it rise in a warm place covered with a dish towel.\*\*\* By the time the custard has been prepared, the dough will be raised enough to be ready. (If your home is drafty, you can preheat your oven to 200 degrees, shut it off and put the dough in there.)

If you have a “crock-type” bowl that is great. I don’t, so I use a regular stainless steel mixing bowl. This recipe will make enough dough for five 9-inch pie pans or six 8-inch pie pans.

### Custard Filling:

While the dough is rising, mix the custard filling with a hand mixer or mix-master on low until the filling reaches a creamy consistency. Then put it into a double boiler. (Water must already be boiling). Stir constantly as it thickens. If it gets too thick, add milk and keep stirring.

(If you don’t have a double boiler, don’t worry. You can just carefully cook it in a regular pan, stirring often. Some recipes don’t even call for the custard to be cooked, but you would probably need to bake the kuchen a little longer.)

6 eggs

1 and ½ Tbsp. flour

1-1/2 C sugar

3 C whipping cream\*\*\*\*

1-1/2 tsp. Vanilla

Cinnamon

This recipe fits a regular size double boiler and fills 5-6 kuchen.

When the dough has risen sufficiently (about twice the size), divide it into five or six parts by cutting it with a sharp knife. Rub a little Crisco or lard on your hands. Take a chunk and work it with your fingers into a little pancake shape. Then put it into the pie pan and flatten it evenly, pushing the dough only a half-inch to an inch up the sides.

Top with desired cut-up fruit. If using apples, choose a tart variety such as Granny Smith. Peel, core and slice it into thin pieces. If using dried apricots or prunes, you need to soften them in warm water by letting them soak. Or cover them with water and put them in the microwave for one to two minutes. Divide them in two with your fingers before putting on the crust. For canned, sliced peaches, drain and pat dry with paper towels. For rhubarb, cut the stalks into small pieces. If the rhubarb is frozen, allow to thaw and then pat dry. For cottage cheese, use the dry curd variety and mix with sugar. If you cannot find dry curd, you can use the large curd and drain first.

Carefully pour two ladles of the custard filling over the fruit and dough. Sprinkle with cinnamon.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes or until the dough is golden brown. You may want to set the timer for 15 minutes, check and then bake longer.

Remove from the oven and allow to rest. Custard will set as it cools.