



Gratz Insider, Summer 2014 - Story Continuation

[To return to the newsletter, close this page.]

The Gratz Gourmet

Unsurprisingly, *Crisco Recipes for the Jewish Housewife* was published by Procter & Gamble, the makers of Crisco. The company started targeting its promotion of Crisco to consumers of various ethnicities in the 1920's. Since this product could be used in both meat and dairy food preparation, it facilitated kosher cooking, making Jews a logical target of the company's marketing campaign. According to Sheilah Kaufman in an article in Jewish Woman Magazine, Procter & Gamble even proclaimed that Crisco was "a product for which the Hebrew Race had been waiting 4,000 years."
[\(www.jwi.org/page.aspx?pid=1204\)](http://www.jwi.org/page.aspx?pid=1204)

To strengthen the appeal of Crisco to the Jewish demographic, Procter & Gamble published *Crisco Recipes for the Jewish Housewife* in 1933, which catered to European Jewish immigrants by including recipes in Yiddish. This book has become somewhat of a cultural icon and a frequent traveler through interlibrary loan. In just the last few months, Gratz has received two requests for the book from the University of Pittsburgh and one from Sarah Lawrence College.

Amidst recipes for gefilte fish, challah and schnecken, the cookbook also includes the recipe below for cherry pie, using fresh cherries, now in season, to create a wonderful summer treat.

Pie Crust Ingredients

2 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup Crisco
6 to 8 tablespoons cold water

Pie Filling Ingredients

1 quart cherries (or any fresh berry)
1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons flour

1. Sift flour and salt together for pie crust.
2. Work in Crisco.
3. Add cold water, one tablespoon at a time, using just enough to hold mixture together.

4. Divide dough into two parts and roll each out separately.
5. Line pan with one sheet of dough. Keep the other sheet for the top crust.
6. Remove stems and pits from cherries.
7. Mix sugar and flour together for filling and combine with cherries.
8. Place filling in the dough-lined pie pan.
9. Cover filling with the extra sheet of dough by fastening this sheet to the bottom layer of dough at the edges with cold water. Press together with fork or fingers, and slash top here and there to allow escape of steam during baking. (Alternative for the top crust: rip extra sheet of dough into strips and arrange strips in lattice fashion over filling.)
10. Bake at 400 degrees until brown (about 40 minutes).

To peruse *Crisco Recipes for the Jewish Housewife*, either for recipe suggestions or historical interest, contact Nancy Nitzberg in the Gratz College library at 215-635-7300 x159 or at nnitzberg@gratz.edu. Nancy can also direct you to other historic and more recent cookbooks in the library collection, reflecting cooking styles practiced in Jewish communities all over the world.