

FAMILY RECIPES

Great Dishes From Local Chefs | By Christina Elston

A Sweet Southern Treat



PHOTOS COURTESY SOUTHERN GIRL DESSERTS

Catarah Coleman, left, and Shoneji Robison

Our favorite foods often make us think of “home,” especially near the holidays. Catarah Coleman and Shoneji Robison both grew up in Florida. After moving to L.A., Coleman founded Southern Girl Desserts, headquartered in Baldwin Hills, and was soon joined by Coleman. The two brought their childhood with them.

In their homes, “Thanksgiving is a smorgasbord of desserts,” Coleman says. This means overflowing tables of cakes, trifle, banana pudding, ambrosia – and sweet potato pie. These southern girls, like most southerners, have their own take on this classic. “Everyone does their sweet potato pie a little different,” Coleman says. “If you like sweet potato pie, you’re going to love this recipe. It’s really easy to make. It doesn’t take a lot of ingredients.”

Coleman recommends using foil to protect the edge of your pie crust when par baking, and says the crust shouldn’t be

cooked all the way through and should still be warm when you fill it.

The sweet potatoes or yams (they can be used interchangeably) are boiled whole because it’s easier than peeling them first. “Once the yams are soft and have boiled all the way through, the skin literally peels off,” Coleman says. “That’s the best way to get your yams cooked and peeled really quick-

ly.” Finish the pie while the yams are still warm so all the ingredients come together easily.

The finished pie will hold at room temperature for a day, 3-4 days cooled and refrigerated or 8-10 weeks frozen (well wrapped). If you don’t want to make your own, Southern Girl is already taking orders for Thanksgiving desserts.



Southern Girl Desserts Sweet Potato Pie

4 medium size yams or sweet potatoes
1 stick butter, melted
1¼ cup granulated sugar
1 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons cinnamon

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
2 teaspoons lemon juice
3 medium eggs
19-inch pie crust, your favorite recipe or ready made

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Fit your crust into a pie pan and par bake no more than 10 minutes, or according to package instructions.

Boil the yams or sweet potatoes (unpeeled) until soft (usually 30-45 minutes). When cool enough to handle, peel them. Whisk the yams together with the butter, sugar, brown sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, vanilla and lemon juice.

Add three cups of this mixture to a separate bowl or the bowl of a stand

mixer. Add 2 eggs and mix until smooth (approximately 3-5 minutes). Remove any stringy pieces of yam from the mixture and discard.

Beat the remaining egg with 2 teaspoons of water. Brush this over the par-baked crust. Mix 1 teaspoon of cinnamon with the remaining ¼ cup of sugar and sprinkle this over the crust. Pour in the filling.

Bake the pie at 350 degrees for one hour. Allow to cool for one hour, then cut and serve. ♦