

The Crew Quiche

A weighed appareil with extra yolks, strained. A blind-baked, egg-washed shell that stays crisp. A low, gentle bake pulled at a jiggle. Ten portions from one half gastronorm.

Yield: **10 portions** (1/2 GN) Active: **35 min** Total: **2 hr 30** (incl. rest) Oven: **150°C** (300°F) Done: **75°C** internal

WHERE IT WAS BORN

Lorraine (*Lothringen*), on the Franco-German border. The word is from German *Kuchen*, cake; first in the books in 1586, in Duke Charles III's accounts.

EATEN, AUTHENTICALLY

Warm, not hot, as an *entrée* — the original just egg, cream and smoked bacon, no cheese — with a sharp salad and a dry Alsace white.

HOW IT'S USED NOW

A bistro, brunch and traiteur staple worldwide; the same pâte brisée shell turns sweet for a fruit tart (below).

INGREDIENTS

1/2 GN 325x265 MM, ~40 MM DEEP · WEIGHT & VOLUME

APPAREIL (~2 L)

Eggs, large, whole	~600g	x12
Egg yolks, extra (<i>the silk</i>)	~54g	x3
Whole milk	800g	800 ml
Double cream (35%)	600g	600 ml
Fine sea salt	12g	2 tsp
Nutmeg, fresh-grated	1g	½ tsp
White pepper	2g	½ tsp
Dijon (<i>optional</i>)	5g	1 tsp

GARNISH (COOK + DRAIN)

Smoked streaky bacon / lardons	350g	→220g
Onions (<i>or 3 leeks</i>)	2 lg	→300g
Gruyère / Comté, grated	200g	
Parmesan, grated	50g	
Thyme / chives	—	to taste

PÂTE BRISÉE (OR SUB A CRUST, BELOW)

Plain flour	400g
Cold butter, cubed	220g
Fine sea salt	8g
Egg (<i>reserve some for seal</i>)	1
Ice water	60–80g

Crust options (appareil + bake unchanged): brisée — best, crisp, costs time · frozen all-butter shortcrust — the fast version, thaw + line + blind-bake as written · frozen puff — flakier but it puffs (dock + weight hard), soaks (seal + cheese on base mandatory), shrinks ~10–15% · crustless — fastest, butter + Parmesan + breadcrumb.

Kit: 1/2 GN pan (40–65 mm) · baking beans · scale · thermometer · fine sieve · jug · rolling pin

METHOD

- Shell.** Brisée to coarse crumbs, bind with egg + ice water, rest cold 30 min. Line oiled 1/2 GN, dock, rest 20 min. Blind bake 180°C (350°F) 20 min with beans, 8–10 min without until dry + pale gold.

A raw shell never recovers under wet custard. Blind-baking sets the walls so the base is crisp before the appareil touches it. — Keller, Bouchon

- Seal.** Brush hot inside with beaten egg, back in 2 min. Trim overhang.

Egg wash coagulates into a waterproof film over the dried base — the single fix for the soggy bottom under wet custard. — López-Alt / Keller

- Garnish.** Render lardons crisp, drain. Sweat onion/leek in a little of the fat until sweet + dry, drain hard, fold in herbs.

Every gram of water in the garnish leaches into the custard and stops it setting — a layer of weep. Drain harder than feels right. — McGee 2004

The Appareil — the whole game

Ratio: per **1 L dairy** → **8 whole eggs + 2 yolks**, dairy 60% milk / 40% cream, salt ~1%.

- Whisk 12 eggs + 3 yolks + 800g milk + 600g cream + salt, nutmeg, white pepper, Dijon. Blend, do not aerate.
- Strain through a fine sieve into a jug; skim the foam.
- Extra yolks (lecithin + fat) set lower and softer than white → silk without rubber. Straining removes chalazae + air for an even set. — *McGee / Keller*

Build & Bake Low

- Half the cheese on the sealed base, then bacon + onion, then remaining cheese. *Cheese on the base protects the seal again.*
- Pan on the rack first, then pour appareil to ~5 mm below the rim.
- Bake 150°C (300°F), 45–55 min. Egg sets 62→85°C; hotter and the proteins seize + weep. Low + slow is the only clean set. — *McGee / Modernist*

Done: Edges set, centre jiggles like soft jelly. Internal **73–75°C** (167°F). Top barely gold, never puffed.

Rest 20–30 min (carryover to ~80°C, firms to a clean slice) → cut 2x5 = 10 squares. Serve warm.

ONE BASE, TWO DISHES — THE FRUIT TART

The pâte brisée under this quiche is the same dough that lines a French **tarte aux fruits**. Add **60–80g sugar** to the flour for *pâte brisée sucrée*; mix, rest, blind-bake and egg-wash (or apricot-glaze) exactly the same. Fill with crème pâtissière + fresh fruit, or pour a **sweet appareil** (same egg:dairy ratio, sugar for salt) over sliced apple and bake low. *One dough, a savoury lunch and a pudding.*

ELEVATION

TIER 1 — NO EXTRA TIME

- Comté + a little blue** — swap 40g of the Gruyère
- Cayenne pinch** — warmth with the nutmeg
- Caramelise onions fully** — 25 min not 10

TIER 2 — WORTH IT (+15 MIN)

- Leek + smoked haddock** — 250g poached, flaked; leeks not onion
- Roast cherry tomato + basil** — drive off water first
- Brown-butter onions** — finish in 20g browned butter

TIER 3 — RESTAURANT

- All-cream, more yolks** — 1 L cream, 6 eggs + 6 yolks
- Confit garlic custard** — blend 6 cloves before straining
- Rough-puff shell** — blind-bake the same way

TROUBLESHOOT

Soggy bottom	Shell under-baked / not sealed. Fully blind-bake + egg-wash + cheese on base.
Grainy, weeping	Too hot / too long. 150°C only; pull at jiggle / 75°C.
Won't set	Too much dairy or wet garnish. Weigh to ratio; drain hard.
Rubbery slice	Too many whole eggs, no yolks. Hold 8+2 per litre.
Streaky, bubbled top	Over-whisked / unstrained. Blend only, strain, skim.
Cracked, deflated	Oven too hot — souffléed then fell. Lower it; never puff.

CHARTER PREP & STORAGE

Crustless crew	Butter GN, dust Parmesan + breadcrumb, build straight in. Same bake.
Sealed shell	1 d, wrapped RT. Re-crisp 5 min / 160°C.
Garnish	2 d fridge, separate, airtight. Drain again before use.
Appareil	1 d fridge, strained in jug. Re-skim before pouring.
Baked	3 d fridge. Great at RT; reheat 150°C / 12–15 min.
Frozen	1 mo. Thaw fridge, reheat 160°C / 20 min.