

W H E R E W O M E N C O O K

# pie•ography

Where Pie Meets Biography

42 Fabulous Recipes Inspired by 39 Extraordinary Women



**Jo Packham**

Food Styling by Anne Marie Klaske  
Photography by Traci Thorson

# CAROLYN ROBB

Born and raised in South Africa, Carolyn Robb is the youngest of five children. She studied languages in college, and then headed for Europe. After gaining her diploma in Cordon Bleu Cookery, she worked at Kensington Palace as chef to TRH, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester for two years and then for TRH, the Prince and Princess of Wales for “eleven incredible years.” Subsequently, Carolyn worked in Dubai for two years as a consultant and food critic. Needing to escape the intense heat of the desert, she returned to the UK and established her own company. Two years later, in 2005, she was married in California to a wonderful actor, only to be widowed shortly afterwards. After two years in the West Coast sunshine, Carolyn returned to the UK. She now lives in a beautiful corner of Oxfordshire with her gorgeous little daughter, a cockapoo, and two cats. She still cooks a LOT!

Carolyn is now working on a book with Sarah Champier, one that will be bursting with wonderful recipes and will give glimpses of the life behind the green baize door. She also travels abroad regularly with her new brand, “The Royal Touch”; she has visited Hong Kong, Tokyo, and the USA in the past few months. When at home she still cooks for and manages events for clients in the south of England.

Visit Carolyn at [www.carolynrobb.com](http://www.carolynrobb.com).



# *My life & Triple Chocolate, Merry Berry, Snowy Top Pie!*

A Pie! A Pie! My kingdom for this Pie!  
It's no ordinary "Steak & Guinness," Bramley Apple  
or Lemon with Meringue piled high.  
Mine is ... Triple-choc  
Zesty-orange  
Merry-berry  
Creamy-dreamy  
Hint-of-mint  
Schnapps (perhaps ...)  
Snowy playground on the top!  
You'll want a bite. Then another ...  
Then it's hard to stop!

There's a pie in each of us that tells our own life's tale.  
Mine's a little crazy, but that's me; spontaneous,  
determined, obsessed by detail.  
I'm a besotted Mum, devoted chef,  
doting dog-owner and tri-athlete.

To cook is fun.  
To ski ... WHAT JOY!  
Wind in my hair and snow under-feet!

I like perfection, nothing less. You'll find this in my  
dark-choc-orange-pâte-sucrée crust.  
It has deep rich color and a crisp light touch and  
embraces a filling that's bright and robust.

I too am embraced, by my wonderful family;  
Their caring love hugs me tight.  
In one another's joys and successes  
We always delight!

The filling is the life and soul within this unctuous pie;  
Fresh-picked raspberries, white chocolate heaven ...  
"Oooohh" I hear you sigh!

A noble blend of my favorite things,  
with stunning regal hues  
With these I pay a happy tribute  
and very fond "royal" dues  
To my thirteen years at Kensington palace  
—behind the green baize door;  
Cooking for Charles, Di, Wills and Harry

(& sometimes even their special Granny!)

My life's been an ADVENTURE.  
I've always loved to dream,  
I'm driven to strive for goals,  
sometimes quite extreme.  
Through this pie I reminisce...  
Who am I and where've I been?

The decoration on the top is styled with fun and flair!

It celebrates my greatest love; my gorgeous Lucy,  
with ribbons in her hair ...  
Shards of chocolate, dark and white,  
shaped just as you will  
Vivacious mint, more berries red ... Eat it up!  
EVERY bit,  
a-top a far-off hill!

Lucy is my sunshine; a sun that never sets  
Her every smile reminds me, lest I should forget,

Those words of wisdom on my fridge,  
that daily we glance

If you're going  
to walk on thin  
ice, you may as  
well dance!

# Triple Chocolate, Merry Berry, Snowy Top Pie!

makes one 8-inch pie

## Chocolate Pâte Sucrée Crust

2½ oz. caster sugar (or very fine granulated sugar)  
5 oz. sweet butter, cold and cut into small cubes  
½ medium egg  
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract  
7 oz. all-purpose flour  
1 oz. unsweetened dark cocoa powder  
1 orange, zested (very finely grated)  
4 oz. good quality dark chocolate, melted

1. For the crust: Place sugar and butter into bowl of a food processor.
2. Process briefly to cream butter and sugar together.
3. Add egg, vanilla extract, and sift in flour and cocoa powder.
4. Add zested orange. In food processor, mix to point where pastry resembles coarse crumbs.
5. Turn into large bowl and bring together by hand, taking care not to overwork dough and toughen it.
6. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and leave in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.
7. This dough is quite fragile to handle, so I roll it out between two sheets of baking parchment or plastic wrap, using a little flour sprinkled beneath and on top of dough.
8. Roll it to a thickness of approximately ¼" and line an 8" pie/flan ring or loose-bottomed pie tin. It should be at least 1½" deep.

9. Chill in refrigerator for 20 minutes before lining pastry with baking parchment and filling it with ceramic baking beans.
10. Preheat oven to 400°F.
11. Bake crust for 15–20 minutes.
12. Remove baking beans and return to oven at 380°F for an additional 5–10 minutes. Crust should be crisp and light brown.
13. Leave to cool.

## Pie Filling

1½ cups crème fraîche (I prefer not to use the low fat version!)  
2 cups whipping/heavy cream  
14 oz. good quality white chocolate, coarsely chopped (or you can use pistoles)  
1½ tsp. pure vanilla extract (not artificial vanilla flavoring!)  
¼ cup thick Greek yogurt  
12 oz. raspberries (freshly picked are even better!)  
6 oz. fresh blueberries, washed and dried  
4 TB. Raspberry Eau-de-Vie (schnapps) or Cassis (blackcurrant liqueur)

1. Heat all of crème fraîche with ½ cup of cream.
2. Place white chocolate into bowl and pour hot crème fraîche and cream mixture over it.
3. Stir until chocolate dissolves.
4. Cool further before covering with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2–3 hours, until it has thickened but is NOT set solid! (If it sets too hard it can be brought back by placing bowl in warm water and stirring thoroughly.)
5. Whisk remaining cream until thick but still flowing.
6. Fold cream carefully into chocolate mixture together with vanilla extract and Greek yogurt.
7. Return to refrigerator for at least an hour to firm up.



## Pie Assembly

1. Spread 4 ounces of melted dark chocolate over base of crust and leave to set. (This chocolate prevents crust from going soggy!)
2. Remove crust from ring or tin and place on flat plate or board.
3. Spread one third of filling in base of tart.
4. Sprinkle all raspberries and blueberries on top of chocolate filling (apart from the 16 of each kept aside for decoration).
5. Sprinkle liqueur over berries.
6. Spread remaining chocolate filling on top berries, shaping it into dome.

## Decorations

- 24 milk or dark chocolate sticks, at least 4-inches long
- 1 oz. dark chocolate, melted
- A little very fine red ribbon, twine, or thread
- A tiny snowman, skiing doll, or other figure to sit on the swing, maximum of 1-inch high
- 16 perfect raspberries (taken from the 12 oz. raspberries)
- 16 dark and white striped chocolate sticks, approximately 3-inches long (available from most specialty cake decorating stores)
- 16 perfect blueberries (taken from the 6 oz. blueberries)
- 16 white chocolate sticks, approximately 3-inches long
- 16 sprigs fresh mint
- 2 TB. white chocolate, coarsely grated
- Confectioner's sugar for decoration

1. Make the "swing."
2. Break 5 dark chocolate sticks into  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " lengths.
3. Place 4 of them in center of tart, leaning against one another (as per picture). Stick them together at top using a little melted chocolate.
4. To make "seat," break another chocolate stick into 3 times 1" lengths. Stick those together using a little more melted chocolate.
5. Using red thread, twine, or ribbon, attach swing to remaining 3" length of chocolate stick.
6. Lay this across top of the two uprights and "stick" into position using little blobs of melted chocolate.
7. Position your snowman or other figure on seat of the swing.
8. Place 16 raspberries around edge at equal intervals.
9. Stick in striped chocolate sticks just to left of each raspberry, pointing out from tart.
10. Place one blueberry just above each raspberry.
11. Position dark and white chocolate sticks between blueberries, angled in opposite directions.
12. Place a sprig of mint between each raspberry.
13. Sprinkle grated white chocolate around swing in center of the tart.
14. Keep well chilled until serving.
15. Just before serving, dust with "snow"—a little confectioner's sugar!

*Tip: For the crust, I double the recipe so that I can use the whole egg. The extra dough can be made into a second pie crust or some tiny cookies. Just add a handful of white chocolate drops!*

