

Lemon-lime Meringue Pie

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Photo courtesy Tonto Bar & Grill

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Citrus trees bulging with fruit make us think about lemon meringue pie. Pastry Chef Amanda Crick (Tonto Bar & Grill and Cartwright's) thinks about it, too, but she takes the American diner classic to a whole new level. Crick has a few layering tricks up her chef-coat sleeve, and the result is a gorgeous pie that begs to be devoured, one blissful bite after the next.

She starts by roasting almonds and then grinding them to mix into her buttery pie dough. Next, she spreads a layer of tart lime curd over the partially baked crust. Fresh raspberries and slices of kiwi snuggle into the sweet-tart curd.

Crick then smooths a fluffy mousse of lemon curd lightened with sour cream and melted white chocolate over the fruit-studded curd and spreads one more layer of lime curd on top of that.

Next, she pipes button-size stars of thick meringue all over the top of the pie. Using a blowtorch, she creates a field of snow-white caps contrasted with charred tips and ridges.

That adorable little honeybee gracing the top is edible, too, molded from marzipan (almond paste) with chocolate stripes and sliced almonds for wings. A spiral cookie – a crisp almond Florentine – leans against the pie, as if in admiration. Pools of raspberry and lime fruit purées

surround the wedge of pie art.

“I was looking for a combination of different flavors and textures,” Crick says. The creaminess of the sour cream and white chocolate mousse tempers the mouth-puckering sweet tart curd, and the slight crunch from the crust all add up to mission accomplished. Crick calls the dessert lemon-lime sour cream meringue pie (\$9). We call it delicious.

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