

The Great American Apple Pie Bake-Off!

Official Rules & Regulations

Hosted by the Gaston County Museum
4th of July Celebration

Celebrate Independence Day with a slice of Americana at *The Great American Apple Pie Bake-Off!* Bakers of all skill levels are invited to compete for bragging rights, ribbons, and prizes in this festive community tradition.

Contest Date & Location

Date: July 4

Location: Gaston County Museum

Check-In Time: 12:00 PM – 12:40 PM

Judging Begins: 12:45 PM

Winners Announced: Approximately 1:30 PM

Age Categories

Participants will compete in one of the following divisions:

1. **Junior Bakers:** Ages 10–14
2. **Teen Bakers:** Ages 15–18
3. **Adult Bakers:** Ages 19+

Participants may only enter one category.

Entry Rules

1. Registration

- Advance registration is encouraged. To register, please email Alex Brooks at Alexander.Brooks@gastongov.com with your name and age category.
- Limited same-day entries may be accepted based on available space.
- One pie entry per participant.

2. Pie Requirements

- All pies must be homemade.
- Pies must be apple-based and baked from scratch.
- Store-bought crusts are permitted, though homemade crusts are encouraged.
- Pies may include additional flavors or ingredients (caramel, bourbon, cheddar crust, spices, etc.), but apples must remain the primary ingredient.
- No cream, custard, refrigerated, or no-bake pies allowed.
- Pies must be baked in a standard pie dish (approximately 8–10 inches).

3. Food Safety

- All pies must be prepared in a sanitary kitchen environment.
- Contestants are responsible for noting any major allergens.
- Museum staff reserve the right to refuse any entry deemed unsafe or unsuitable.

4. Presentation

- Decorations are welcome but not required.
- Judging focuses primarily on taste and quality rather than elaborate presentation.
- Entries should arrive ready to serve.

5. Anonymous Judging

- Each pie will receive a number upon check-in.
- Judges will not know the identity of the bakers during scoring.

Judging Criteria

Pies will be scored on a 100-point scale using the following criteria:

Category	Points
Flavor & Overall Taste	40
Crust Quality & Texture	20

Category	Points
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Filling Consistency	20
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Appearance & Presentation	10
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Creativity & Originality	10
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Judges' decisions are final.

Awards

Prizes will be awarded for the first place in each category and a certificate for all participants.

Conduct & Sportsmanship

- Participants and guests are expected to behave respectfully toward judges, volunteers, and fellow bakers.
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct may result in disqualification.
 - By entering, participants agree to allow photographs of themselves and their pies to be used for museum promotional purposes.
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Tasting & Public Sampling

Following judging, pies may be displayed or shared with attendees while supplies last unless the contestant requests otherwise at check-in.