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## Bonita cafe's key lime pie takes the cake

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Survey Cafe's kitchen knows the secret to a Key lime pie that pops with fresh flavor, kicks with creamy consistency and scintillates with its brown-sugary crust oozing with buttery goodness.

It's all the handiwork of pastry chef Shawn Reber, 41, of Bonita Springs.

"That's awesome!" Reber says he thought when he learned his creation ranked first among in a blind taste testing.

Reber has been crafting this pie for eight of his 10 years in the pastry business, which got its start at Jane Thompson's Mondo Bakery in Atlanta.

The recipe comes from his experiences at other restaurants, with his own twist mixed in.

The ... er ... key, to making this pie burst with flavor is to use fresh-squeezed lime juice, plus fresh Nellie & Joe's Famous Key Lime Juice, Reber says.

"And the lime rind, it gives it a really good kick," he says.

Shaving the lime zest adds time to the preparation, but it set the pie apart from the other contestants.

Reber bakes his Key lime pie at a lower temperature than some people, he says, at 300 degrees for 30 to 45 minutes.

For a crust that calls attention to itself, he uses ground graham crackers, brown sugar and butter.

A lot of sugar and butter?

"Oh yeah," Reber says and laughs. "It's not good for you at all. Well, except for a lot of vitamin C."

Survey Cafe, open on Wilson Street just off Old 41 Road in downtown Bonita Springs, doesn't always have Key lime pie, says manager and chef John Federici.

"We make pies by customer request, usually, and by whatever sells the best," Federici says. "We need a little notice to make it if we don't have it made already."

Co-owner Lori Nelson says they tried selling orange blossom pie, but people just kept asking for the Florida favorite from the Keys.

"It's just a Florida tradition. It really is," Nelson says. "Especially in the summertime. It's so refreshing."

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