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Our team- left to right; Diego, Pierre, me -Denis, Koocy and Sena. (photographer Wilson)

[piepastry](#)We have a team of 5 persons staying with us now. Diego from Chile has been here the longest. Pierre is from France. Sena is from Japan and Wilson and Koocy are from HongKong. All are eating with us and thus meal times are an important feature of each day. As every one seems to have strong appetites we need to keep thinking of some creative ideas and ones that in the end fill every one up.

This year every person gets their time to be Master Chef. We have a dinner roster and where possible we get the ingredients in for each person's selection. Some of our crew were very nervous at first but I would say in general they warmed to the event and each time it was their turn researched a choice and approached it with increasing confidence. And Ann's and my job is really just to encourage and ensure that things go to plan and for the less experienced that the kitchen is not destroyed or worse.

My interest this year has been to learn more about pie making both fruit pies and savoury pies. We had a lot of fruit which traditionally doesn't sell so well. It seemed to me to be an obvious solution to use it more in our desserts. ( and I may add we need lots of food to fill these guys for as they work in the field mainly weeding they come in very hungry) I have had a lot of support from our team and especially Diego who must have developed an interest in cooking from his younger years.

Not every thing has gone smoothly in these efforts and sometimes we have to work harder to make our not so good efforts result in something palatable.



fruit pies galore

In the first joint effort we made some fruit pies. On the first night I made the mistake of warming the butter and as a result the pastry was almost impossible to roll out and transfer to the pie. So as you can see the visuals of the lacework on the top are a little rough. This was originally an apple pie recipe but now we use whatever fruit is available.



with hot custard - a yummy dessert

We do have the advantage in that we have lots of fruit and thus have no trouble providing fillings. The fruit pie pastry recipe comes from Justin a Dutch man who was here last year. It has proven to be very successful and we use it all the time. I have attached a copy of this [recipe](#) so that my readers can have the enjoyment of using it.

I have always wanted to make meat pies and pasties. Well we didn't really intend to make a pie this time but aimed for Cornish Pasties. This time we used Wallaby meat which had been eating up my top orchard. They must get so hungry when food is short that they still get into our orchards in spite of the electric fence and all the other measures we have taken. ([g](#))



autographed

I was going to make Cornish pasties but under Diego's influence they turned pasties using the recipe Empanada dough. My research seems to indicate that the origin of these pasties was from the Cornish miners who worked all over the world and long after they departed this recipe remained. The difference between the two seems primarily in the way the filling is handled. The Cornish do not precook their filling ingredients nor do they use spices. Onion, meat and potato are the prime ingredients of their fillings. Whilst the Chileans use the same ingredients they are certainly not bound to such a restricted range and usually cook the ingredients first. As we were using Wallaby meat we have found from experience it often requires quite a bit of cooking so we too favored the Chilean way.



Our attempt at empanada's

All went well except for the quantity of filling where I guessed and as a result we had giant pasties.

Thanks to the creative instincts of our workers and my wife Ann we are eating very well this year.