

Nigel's Beef & Beer Pie

(serves 4)

Why make it? Nigel says this dish is 'something quick & easy to make, that I learnt at college and wanted to share'



Ingredients

- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 small celery stick, chopped
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 700g beef shin, featherblade or stewing steak, cut into large chunks
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 beef stock cubes
- 2 sprigs thyme
- 540ml can dark ale or beer

Method

For the beef filling

1. Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas mark 3
2. Using a sauce pan with a lid, soften the onion and celery in butter.
3. Stir in the flour until it has disappeared
4. Stir in the beef and Worcestershire sauce
5. Crumble in stock cubes and add the thyme
6. Pour over the ale, bring to a simmer, then cover and cook in the oven for 2½ hrs
7. Remove lid and cook for another 30 minutes – this should thicken the sauce nicely

For the pastry

1. Roll out half the pastry and use to line a 20-22cm pie dish
2. Using a slotted spoon, spoon in all of the meat, then pour over some of the sauce until the meat is just coated and put the rest of the sauce into a saucepan
3. Roll out the remaining pastry and use it to cover the pie
4. Trim the edge with a small sharp knife, then crimp or fork the edges to seal.
5. Make a small heart from cuttings
6. Brush top of the pie and heart with beaten egg, then dip the heart into poppy seeds and stick on top
7. Bake for 30-40 minutes until golden brown and crisp
8. Reheat sauce and serve with the pie along with some mash and greens