

## Fishy pie with celeriac mash

Serves 6 - 8, takes about an hour, plus oven time

Notes on the ingredients:

Fish – this pie is all about the fish, funnily enough. I put in a mixture of whiting filets, cod steaks, coley steaks and prawns, as that was what was available in the market that day. You can use any kind of white fish or salmon, but try and find sustainably caught fish if you can. Smoked haddock is popular, and would give you a smokier, saltier pie. If you buy fish filets and shelled prawns, the whole process is a little less fiddly. On the other hand, you don't get the bonus of being able to make your own stock for the next time around with the left over shells and bones. See next point.

Stock – Getting into the habit of making stock is a pretty important step towards kitchen efficiency and thriftiness, and isn't really any extra effort once you get used to it. I've already shared this video about how to use vegetable off-cuts to make veggie stock. This week, I decided to make fish pie partly because I already had some fish stock in the fridge. We'd had chinese steamed prawns for dinner a few days earlier, so I boiled up the left over shells and heads. Alternatively, if you ask at a fishmonger, they will often be able to give you bones and off-cuts, which you can use to make up a batch. Boil everything up for twenty minutes in a litre of water and then strain.

- \* Assorted fish – 700g
- \* Prawns – 300g, peeled
- \* Fish stock – 1 litre
- \* Butter – about 50g
- \* Fennel – 1 bulb, finely diced
- \* Leek – 1 large, sliced
- \* Parsley – a small bunch, chopped (leaves and stalks)
- \* Marsala, white wine or sweet vermouth – a dash
- \* Salt – ½ tsp
- \* Crème fraiche – a few tablespoons
- \* Lemon – juice of 1
- \* Celeriac – 1 large or 2 small
- \* Nutmeg – a few grinds

In a large casserole dish bring the stock to a very low simmer. Place the fish (and the prawns, if using raw) in the stock and poach until just cooked through. The prawns will only take a couple of minutes and the fish timings will depend on how thick your pieces are, so keep an eye on them. Remove each piece of fish once it is cooked with a slotted spoon and set aside. Pour the stock into a separate bowl and set aside as well.

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees C, if you're planning to serve the pie straight away.

In the same casserole dish, fry the fennel, leek and parsley stalks in a generous knob of butter along with the dash of booze. You can leave the pan, covered, over a low to medium heat for about twenty minutes, or until the vegetables are nice and soft.

Meanwhile, cook the celeriac. Scrub clean with a vegetable brush and remove any stringy bits. Chop into rough chunks and boil in plenty of salted water for about 15 minutes, or until tender. Drain, then return to the pan along with the remaining butter, nutmeg and a crack of pepper. Blend until smooth using a hand blender, or pop the whole lot into a mixer. Check for seasoning and add more butter if you like.

When the fish is cool enough to handle, carefully remove any bones with your fingers. Keep them to make stock (along with any prawns shells) for next time. Break the fish up into large flakes.

Add the salt, crème fraiche, lemon and some black pepper to the fennel and leeks, and stir to combine. Then stir in the stock. Finally, remove the pan from the heat and stir in the fish and prawns.

Spoon the celeriac puree on top of the fish in an even layer. Use a fork to make pretty patterns on the top. Bake in the oven for twenty minutes, or until piping hot and golden brown on top.

Serve with steamed green vegetables or a green salad.