

James Strawbridge's Scotch Beef and Ale Pie

This is a great winter warmer that you can cook from scratch or adapt to use leftovers from your Sunday roast. Serves 4-6.

Ingredients:

- 1kg Scotch Beef casserole steak, diced
- 6-8 rashers of smoked streaky bacon
- 6 shallots, roughly chopped
- 6 sprigs of thyme
- 100g butter
- 1 can of beef stock
- 1 bottle of Purity Gold Ale
- 1 tbsp plain flour
- Salt and cracked black pepper

For the pastry:

- 500g plain flour
- 250g salted butter, diced
- 1 tbsp finely chopped thyme leaves
- Cold water
- 1 beaten egg

Method:

- Make a basic shortcrust pastry by mixing the flour and butter in a food processor until it reaches a breadcrumb consistency. You can do this bit by hand if you don't have a food processor by the way; just use your fingertips to 'rub' the butter into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Sprinkle in the thyme and gradually add the cold water until the pastry comes together to form a dough. Press and shape the dough into a ball, cover with cling film tightly and rest in the fridge for 1-2 hours.
- Season the Scotch beef generously with salt and pepper. Sear it in a large pan with plenty of foaming, hot butter, along with the bacon. Add the shallots and thyme and cook on a high heat until the meat is browned all over.
- Next, add the flour and cook it out so that the juices in the pan start to thicken. Deglaze the pan with a bottle of beer, followed with the beef stock. Reduce the heat and cook for 2 hours until the beef softens.
- Strain off the pie liquor and keep for the gravy. Transfer the meat into a pie dish. Roll out your pastry and cover the pie dish completely – use a fork to seal or crimp the pastry neatly around the edges. Brush with beaten egg and cook at 200°C for 35 mins until golden.
- Serve a large slice of steak and ale pie with silky mashed potatoes and of course, the meat juices as a gravy!