

Classic mince pies

★★★★★ 4.8 | 10 ratings



Prepare

Less than 30 mins

Cook

10 to 30 mins

Serve

Makes 12 mince pies

Benjamina's mince pie pastry is just short and crumbly enough for the perfect pie but still very easy to work. Use the extra pastry scraps to decorate to your heart's content.

By Benjamina Ebuehi

Ingredients

300g/10oz plain flour, plus extra for dusting

pinch salt

150g/5oz fridge-cold butter, cut into 1cm/½in dice

3 tbsp icing sugar

1 large free-range egg, beaten with 1 tbsp very cold water

300g/10½oz mincemeat

To finish

1 medium free-range egg, beaten

1 tbsp caster sugar

Method

1. To make the pastry, place the flour and salt in a food processor and add the butter. Using the pulse function, whizz until it resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Add the icing sugar and pulse again to mix. Add the beaten egg mixture and pulse briefly to mix to a rough dough.
2. Tip the pastry out onto the work surface, and using your hands, lightly bring the dough together into a ball and wrap in cling film or place in a plastic sealable box to chill for about 20–30 minutes (this prevents pastry shrinkage later on).
3. If making the pastry by hand, put the flour into a large bowl. Grate in the butter using the coarse grater blade on a box grater. Coat the butter in the flour by lightly mixing it with your fingers. Using your fingertips, lightly rub the butter into the flour until it resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Stir in the caster sugar and salt. Using a table knife, stir in the beaten egg mixture to make a rough dough, then turn out onto a lightly floured board and bring together into a ball. Wrap and rest in the fridge as above.
4. Brush a 12-hole bun tin with melted butter and set aside in the fridge.
5. After chilling, turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface. Roll out into a circle that is about 4mm/⅛in thick. Use a round cutter to cut out 12 discs of pastry that are about 6mm/¼in bigger than the size of the bun tin holes. Bring the scraps of pastry together lightly and re-roll as necessary.
6. Press a round of pastry into the bottom of each hole. Fill each pastry case with a level tablespoon of mincemeat. Don't overfill them as they will leak and make your mince pies stick to the tray.
7. Cut out 12 lids with a smaller pastry cutter, re-rolling the pastry as needed. These can be fluted or straight-edged, as you like. Brush a little beaten egg around the base of the lid and stick it down onto the pie edge, pressing gently to seal. (Try to avoid getting egg wash between the pastry and the tin, as this can also lead to sticking.)
8. Brush the tops of the mince pies with egg wash and sprinkle lightly with caster sugar. (You can use any pastry scraps and tiny cutters to cut out shapes like holly leaves and stars to stick on the tops of your pies.) Use a sharp knife to make a small incision in the middle of the pie, or several decorative incisions, to let out the steam as they bake.
9. Return the pies to the fridge while you preheat the oven to 190C/170C (Fan)/Gas 5.
10. Bake the mince pies for 20–25 minutes, or until golden-brown and crisp. Set the tray on a wire rack to cool for five minutes, and then turn the mince pies out. Serve with your choice of brandy butter, cream or ice cream.

Recipe tips

You can stretch out the recipe a little further by cutting star tops instead of sealing the pies completely. Just ensure your stars can be fixed to the edges of the pie case, or they may shrink (or fall off).

How-to videos



Rubbing in

00:30



Rolling out pastry

00:58