

CHICKEN, LEEK AND TARRAGON PIE

Ingredients

3 oz flour
½ tsp cayenne pepper
½ tsp white pepper
1 lb skinless boneless chicken breasts, cut into large chunks
2 tbsp olive oil
1 oz butter
2 leeks, white part only, thickly sliced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
3½ fl oz white wine
9 fl oz chicken stock
5 oz heavy cream
5 oz frozen peas
2 tbsp tarragon leaves, chopped
Small fistful parsley, chopped
500g block ready-made puff pastry
2 medium egg yolks, beaten

Directions

1. Mix flour, cayenne, white pepper and a generous sprinkling of salt in a bowl. Toss the chicken in the seasoned flour and shake off excess. Heat oil and butter in a large frying pan over high heat, until the butter starts to foam. Fry the chicken for 7-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until light brown. Scoop from the pan with a slotted spoon and set aside.
2. Reduce the heat. Cook the leeks and garlic until the leeks begin to wilt. Add the wine and boil for 1 minute, then pour in the stock and cream and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the chicken, peas, tarragon and parsley and cook for a minute. Leave to cool.
3. Preheat the oven to 400° with a baking tray in it. Roll the pastry to ⅛-in thickness, cut it to line and top four individual pie dishes; you may need to re-roll the trimmings. Ease it into the corners with your fingers and let it hang over the edges. Divide the filling between dishes and brush pastry edges with the beaten yolks. Place tops on pies, trim (use the trimmings to decorate the pies), then seal edges with a fork. (*The pies may now be frozen for up to 1 month.*) Brush the pies with remaining yolk and make 3 small piercings in the top of each. Put the pies on the baking tray and bake for 30-40 minutes or until golden brown.

This recipe makes 4 individual pies. To make just one large pie, put filling in an unlined 1-quart pie dish and top with pastry. Use same oven temperature and cooking times.

