

2 Picnic Pies

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Scotch Egg Pie

200g plain flour

100g butter, cut into small cubes

7 medium eggs

Good handful parsley

1 tablespoon thyme leaves

1½kg sausagemeat

5 tablespoons dried breadcrumbs (make breadcrumbs and dry out in oven)

1 tablespoon olive oil



Heat oven to 200C. Put the flour and butter into a food processor and process to fine crumbs. Add 2-3 tablespoons of cold water and pulse until it forms a firm pastry dough. Tip out onto a lightly floured surface and knead briefly to form a smooth ball. Roll out and line the base and sides of a 21-22cm deep flan tin. Trim the edges and chill the tart case while you prepare the filling. Put the eggs in a small pan and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 4 minutes. Cool quickly under running cold water and peel off the shells. Chop the parsley and thyme. Tip the sausagemeat into a large bowl and add half the herbs, a little salt and plenty of freshly ground black pepper. Press a third of the sausagemeat over the base of the pastry case and make a circular trench in the sausagemeat. Trim the ends off each egg and line them up to form a ring of egg, then cover with the remaining sausagemeat, forming a smooth dome and making sure the eggs are completely covered. Mix the remaining herbs with the breadcrumbs and oil, and sprinkle evenly over the pie. Place on a baking sheet and bake for 1 hour until the pastry is golden, the filling cooked and the topping crisp and golden. If there are any juices bubbling around the edge of the pie, carefully tip them into a jug and discard. Leave the pie to cool in the tin. Serve cut into thick slices with salad.

Bombay Potato and Spinach Pies

1½kg large waxy new potatoes such as Charlotte, halved

85g butter

2 onions, chopped

1 tablespoon cumin seed
1 tablespoon black mustard seed
2 tablespoon finely chopped ginger
2 red chillies, halved, deseeded and sliced
3 tablespoons korma paste
400g bag fresh spinach
4 tomatoes, chopped
Small bunch coriander, chopped

For the pastry

350g strong white flour
1 teaspoon salt
225g butter
2 tablespoons water
1 egg, beaten

Heat oven to 200C. To make the filling, heat a pan of salted water. When boiling, add potatoes and boil for 15 minutes or until tender. Melt the butter then fry the onions for a few minutes. Add cumin, mustard seeds, ginger and chillies and fry, stirring occasionally, for about 7 minutes until soft. Stir in curry paste. Cook the spinach in a little water until wilted. Drain and squeeze out as much liquid as you can, then chop it. Drain the potatoes and tip them into the spice mixture. Crush lightly to break them up into chunks rather than mash. Toss in the spice mixture with plenty of salt to coat them, then add the spinach, tomatoes and coriander.

To make the pastry, put the flour and salt into a bowl. Gently melt the butter with the water. Make a well in the flour and pour in the butter mixture stirring with a spoon until evenly mixed before adding the beaten egg. Use balls of the dough to line individual foil containers, keeping enough back for the lids. It's easier to do this when the pastry is still warm. Spoon the filling into the containers and then make a lid from the remaining pastry. Make a little slit in the top to allow the steam to escape. Bake for 35 minutes until golden and crisp. Serve with a salad and mango chutney or a raita made by mixing plain yogurt with mint sauce.