

Delia's Fish Pie with Rosti Caper Topping

The ultimate comfort food, unless you're a fish, or say, a vegetarian, but I did used to love it. (jojo)

One can vary the fish in this luxurious dish, as long as you have 1kg in total.

Serves 4 - 6

Ingredients

700g halibut
225g king scallops, including the coral, cut in half
110g uncooked tiger prawns, thoroughly defrosted if frozen, and peeled
150ml dry white wine
275ml carton of fish stock
1 bay leaf
50g butter
50g plain flour
2 tblsp cream fraiche
6 cornichons drained, rinsed and chopped
1 heaped tblsp chopped fresh parsley
1 dstsp chopped fresh dill
S & P

For the Rosti caper Topping:

900g Desiree or Romano potatoes, even sized if possible
1 tblsp salted capers or capers in brine, drained, rinsed and dried
50g butter, melted
50g strong cheddar cheese, finely grated

Method

Preheat the oven to 220°C

Butter a 5cm deep/1.5 litre baking dish.

Prepare the potatoes by scrubbing them, but leave their skins on. As they all have to cook at the same time, if there are any larger ones cut them in half. Then place them in a saucepan with enough boiling, salted water to barely cover them and cook them for 12 mins after they have come back to the boil, covered with a lid. Strain off the water and cover them with a clean tea-cloth to absorb the steam.

Meanwhile, heat the wine and stock in a medium saucepan, add the bay leaf and some seasoning, then cut the fish in half if it's a large piece, add it to the saucepan and poach the fish gently for 5 minutes. It should be slightly undercooked.

Then remove the fish to a plate, using a draining spoon, and strain the liquid through a sieve into a bowl.

Now rinse the pan you cooked the fish in, melt the butter in it, whisk in the flour and gently cook for 2 minutes. Gradually add the strained fish stock little by little, whisking all the time. When you have a smooth sauce turn the heat to its lowest setting and let the sauce gently cook for 5 minutes. Then whisk in the creme fraiche, followed by the cornichons, parley and dill. Give it all a good seasoning and remove it from the heat.

To make the rosti, peel the potatoes and, using the coarse side of a grater, grate them into long shreds into a bowl. Add the capers and the melted butter and, using two forks, lightly toss everything together so that the potatoes get a good coating of butter. Now remove the skin from the white fish and divide it into chunks, quite large if possible, and combine the fish with the sauce. Next, if you're going to cook the fish pie more or less immediately, all you do is add the raw scallops and prawns to the fish mixture, then spoon it into the well buttered baking dish. Sprinkle the rosti on top, spreading it out as evenly as possible and not pressing it down too firmly. Then finally scatter the cheese over the surface and bake on a high shelf of the oven for 35-40mins.

If you want to make the fish pie in advance, this is possible as long as you remember to let the sauce get completely cold before adding the cooled white fish and raw scallops and prawns. When the topping is on, cover the dish loosely and refrigerate the pie until you're ready to cook it. Give it an extra 5-10 minutes cooking time.

Serve with peas. Always peas with fish pie. It's the law. (Becca)

