

CHICKEN & HAM PIE

Serves 2. Total time from start of preparation to serving: 1 hour 10 minutes

Ingredients

2 boneless skinless chicken breasts, cubed
1 carrot, chopped
6 small potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 tsp oregano
250ml hot chicken stock
15g butter
1 small onion, chopped
50g plain flour
Milk
1 thin slice ham (or 2 slices bacon), cut into strips
Frozen petit pois
500g pack shortcrust pastry
1 egg, beaten

Method

Put the chicken in a large pan with the carrots, potatoes, celery, oregano and seasoning. Add stock and bring to the boil. Reduce heat, cover and cook gently for 15 minutes. Set a colander over a large bowl and pour in the pan contents. Reserve the stock.

Preheat the oven to 200C/gas 6/fan 180C.

Rinse the pan, return to heat and melt the butter. Cook the onions until soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in the flour, then the reserved stock a little at a time, to make a smooth thick sauce. Add some milk to thin the sauce and simmer for 2 minutes. Season.

Mix together the chicken, vegetables and ham in a deep 2.2litre/4 pint ovenproof dish, preferably with a rim or lip. Add a handful of petit pois. Pour over the sauce and leave to cool slightly. Roll out the pastry to about 5cm/2in larger than the top of the dish. Cut a 2.5cm/1in strip from all round the pastry. Brush the rim of the dish with egg and press the strip all round. Brush with egg and lift the pastry on to it, pressing the edges to seal thoroughly. Trim off excess, then mark the pastry edge all round with a fork. Make 4 small slits in the centre. Brush with egg and bake for 25–30 minutes until crisp and golden.