



Raby Castle Christmas Mince Pies



Preparation time

Less than 30 mins

Cooking time

20 mins

Serves

Makes 12 deep mince pies

Ingredients

For the pastry

- 375g Plain Flour
- 250g Butter, Softened
- 125g Caster Sugar, Plus 20g for dusting
- 1 Medium Free-Range Egg

For the filling

- 170g Bramley Apple, Peel, core and finely dice
- 1 Large orange (use zest and juice)
- 1 Lemon unwaxed, Cut rind with no pith, juice Half
- 100g Caster Sugar
- 120g Vegetable Suet
- Pinch Sea Salt
- 225g Currants
- 75ml Brandy

You will need a deep muffin mould with 12 holes, a large round pastry cutter, and a medium pastry cutter.

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.
2. To make the sweet pastry, rub the flour, butter, sugar and egg together with a splash of cold water until it just comes together as a dough. Do not over work the dough. Wrap the pastry in cling film and set aside to chill in the fridge while you make the filling.
3. To make the filling, boil the lemon rind in water until soft. Discard the water and fine chop the lemon rind.
4. Add the rest of the ingredients, allow to soak for 30 min, or overnight if possible to let the flavours develop. The mincemeat filling will last for up to 2 weeks in sealed jar.
5. Roll out the pastry to a 3mm/1/8in thickness. With the large round pastry cutter, cut out 6 x 9cm/3½in discs of pastry. Press the pastry into the muffin cups and fill each one with a good helping of the mincemeat mixture, so that it reaches three-quarters of the way up the side of the pastry-lined cup.
6. With the medium pastry cutter, cut out 6 x 8cm/3¼ in pastry circles for the lids (slightly bigger than the top of the muffin cups). Place a lid on top of each pie and gently push down. Brush with cold water and sprinkle with caster sugar.
7. Bake for 20 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool.
8. Lightly dust with sugar.

Raby Recipe and History

This Christmas our mince pies are inspired by a recipe that has been enjoyed at Raby Castle for almost 250 years. Hidden in the Raby Castle archives, a handwritten 'receipt' book, dating back to the late 18th century features a recipe for Lady Hewitt's Mince Pies. Although we have yet to discover Lady Hewitt's connection with Raby, her recipe was clearly a favourite that was passed on to the Countess of Darlington, who like many modern foodies, carefully copied the recipe into her own notebook for posterity.

Lady Hewitt's mince pies feature all of the traditional ingredients of a good mince pie; from mixed peel to currents, apples and of course, a hearty slug of brandy!

Our Raby Castle Christmas Mince Pies on sale throughout December at the Stables Café and Refreshment Kiosk.

