

Festive Butternut Squash & Stilton Pies



Makes 3 pies

Prep 40 mins

Cooking 20 mins

Easy

Ingredients

25g dried porcini mushrooms
1 butternut squash, about 800g
50g butter
1 tbsp olive oil
200g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
2 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
1 tbsp brandy
6 tbsp double cream or crème fraîche
50g stilton, broken into chunks

50g walnut pieces
140g puff pastry, thawed if frozen
1 egg yolk, beaten

Crunchy walnut topping instead of pastry

25g butter
25g white breadcrumbs
50g walnut pieces
handful fresh parsley

1. Soak the porcini in 150ml boiling water for 20 mins.
2. Meanwhile, peel the squash & cut the flesh into 2 cm chunks. Melt the butter in a large frying pan, add the oil, and fry the squash over a medium heat for 10 mins, stirring occasionally until it begins to caramelize. Stir in the chestnut mushrooms and thyme and fry for 5 mins. Increase the heat and add the brandy. Set aside.
3. Preheat the oven to 200C/Fan 180C/gas 6. Remove the dried mushrooms from the water with a slotted spoon, and roughly chop. Add to the pan with the soaking liquid and double cream and bring to the boil. Remove from the heat, season, and stir in the stilton and walnuts. Divide the mixture between 3x 300ml individual small deep ovenproof pie dishes.
4. Cut the pastry in half and roll out each piece on a lightly floured surface until slightly bigger than the tops of the dishes so the pastry overhangs slightly, and fold in the edges to neaten. Use scraps to cut out holly leaves and make berries. Stick them on to the pastry with a little water. Store in the fridge for up to 24 hours.
5. On the day: brush the tops with beaten egg yolk. Season & bake for 15 to 20 mins until golden, risen and puffed.
6. Alternative walnut topping: Melt 25g butter and toss with 25g white breadcrumbs, 50g walnut pieces and a small handful of chopped fresh parsley. Store the topping and the pies separately in the fridge for up to 24 hours. Sprinkle the topping over the pie filling and bake as above.