

CHEDDAR, APPLE AND JUNIPER PIE

An apple pie with a twist – the fruit goes well with the cheesy flavoured pastry. I like to beat some cream cheese with a little double cream and a sprinkling of brown sugar and dollop it on to the warm pie to serve. You could use cloves to flavour this in place of the juniper berries.

225g / 8oz flour + a pinch of salt
225g / 8oz softened butter
225g / 8oz cheddar cheese – finely grated
8 dessert apples which will fall during cooking such as Laxtons or Cox's
2 tbsp. brown sugar
8 juniper berries
zest of 1 lemon

You will need a deep plate pie dish

Pre-heat oven to 220C gas mark 7

Sieve flour and salt into a baking bowl and lightly rub in the softened butter
Stir in the grated cheese and bind dough together using your hand. It will be quite soft. Wrap in film and chill for about 20 minutes whilst you prepare the filling.
Peel, core and slice the apples.
Crush the juniper berries and add to the sugar. Stir in the lemon zest
Bring the pastry back to room temperature. Carefully roll out just over ½ the pastry and use to line the base and rim of the plate pie dish. Trim the edges. Bind the trimmings with the remainder of the pastry
Pile the apple into the pastry lined dish, scattering with the spiced sugar as you go
Carefully and lightly roll out the rest of the pastry and use it to top the plate pie
Crimp and flute the edges and make a small hole in the top to allow the steam to escape.
Decorate with pastry leaves using any trimmings
Bake in the hot oven for about 20 minutes and then reduce the heat to 180C, gas 4 for a further 30 to 40 minutes until the pastry is cooked through and the apples are tender