

## The Best Fish Pie

Fish pie is a dish that should be allowed to change slightly every time you make it. Depending on what fish is available/sustainable. When made well, fish pie can be sophisticated, comforting and remarkable all at the same time. This recipe should be treated as a guide rather than a set recipe.

500ml milk

2 bay leaves

a few peppercorns

1 small onion

3-4 large, floury potatoes

2 Tbsp butter (for mashing the spuds)

a glug of cream (for the spuds)

3-4 eggs

30g flour + 80g butter (roux for the white sauce)

fish (see step 4)

handful of parsley, finely chopped

1. Steep a couple of bay leaves, a few peppercorns and a small quartered onion in warm milk (this will be used to make a white sauce for the pie). If you have any fish trimmings or prawn shells then chuck them in too. The more flavour the better.
2. Boil the potatoes in salted water. When they are soft, drain and mash them well with lots of butter and cream. The top should be smooth, rich and delicious.
3. Boil your eggs - I usually drop them into the boiling water, remove it from the heat and time 10 minutes. The whites and yolks should end up set firm, but with a little "moisture" in the middle of the yolk (so not entirely 100% set). Perfect.
4. Use a type of fish from each of these genres: White, oily, smoky, prawny/shrimpy. You can add anything else that takes your fancy too, but don't go overboard. Remove as many bones as you can.
5. Strain the milk well and set aside. Add the flour and butter to a saucepan and mix into a roux over a medium heat. Add the milk a little at a time, mixing like a mad idiot until it's all been incorporated and you don't have any lumps. You can cheat a bit by using a hand blender. Cook until the sauce thickens. Add the chopped parsley and remove from the heat
6. Chop the fish into rough chunks. Shrimp and other small morsels can go in whole. Mix the fish gently together with the boiled eggs and place everything into an oven proof dish. Pour the white sauce over the top. Add the mashed potato to the top. I usually put it on in small blobs which I then smooth together into a uniform layer.
7. Make swirly patterns on the top with a fork (these ridges will go super-crispy in the oven). Place into a preheated 180°C oven and cook for about 30-40 minutes (or until it's done). The top should be golden and the sauce should be bubbling.

