**Stargazey pie recipe**

Stargazey pie originates from Mousehole and is traditionally eaten in the village on the eve of 23rd December, as part of the festival of Tom Bawcock. The festival is held in celebration and memorial of the efforts of the legendary Mousehole resident, whose heroic catch of fish during severe winter storms prevented the villagers from starving.

We’ve teamed up with top Cornish chef, Nathan Outlaw to bring you a modern twist on the famous pie. This recipe, for four individual pies rather than one big one, uses mackerel rather than pilchards and leaves out the traditional potato and egg.

To make this fishy delight you will need:

4 medium mackerel, gutted and butterflied, tails intact

For the pastry

* 250g plain flour, plus extra to dust
* 1 tsp fine sea salt
* 250g very cold butter, cut into cubes
* About 125ml ice-cold water
* Egg wash (1 egg yolk beaten with 2 tsp milk)

For the filling

* 50ml light rapeseed oil
* 3 rashers of smoked streaky bacon, derinded and diced
* 2 shallots, peeled and chopped
* 2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
* 40g plain flour
* 50ml cider vinegar
* 100ml cider
* 100ml fish stock
* 150g hog’s pudding, diced
* 3 tsp chopped chives
* Cornish sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method

1. To make the pastry, combine the flour and salt in a bowl. Add the butter and rub in using your fingertips, until the butter cubes are smaller and the dough is grainy. Add enough water, a little at a time, to bring the dough together. Roll the dough into a ball, wrap in cling film and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes.
2. Next, roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface to a rectangle, about 30 x 20cm. Fold into three, as if folding a letter to go into an envelope.
3. Turn the pastry 90° and roll out and fold as before, then wrap the pastry in cling film and chill for 30 minutes. Repeat the same two roll, fold and turns once more, then wrap and chill for a further 30 minutes. The pastry is now ready to roll.
4. While the pastry is chills, make the filling. Heat a saucepan over a medium heat and add the oil. When hot, add the diced bacon and cook for 4 minutes until golden. Add the shallots and garlic and cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the flour and cook, stirring, for a further 2 minutes.
5. Gradually add the cider vinegar, cider and fish stock, stirring as you go. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to ensure it does not catch. Add the hog’s pudding and chives, then take off the heat.
6. After removing the pan from the hob, season with salt and pepper and divide between 4 individual pie dishes. Clean the edges of the dishes and leave to cool.
7. Roll out the pastry into 4 ovals or rounds (large enough to cover the pie dishes) and put back into the fridge for 10 minutes to firm up.
8. Heat your oven to 200°C/Gas 6.
9. Cut the tails from the mackerel and set aside. Check the fish for any pin bones and season with salt and pepper.
10. Lay the fillets on top of the cooled filling. Brush the rims of the dishes with egg wash and position the pastry lids over the filling. Trim away excess pastry but don’t be too tidy – you’re after a rustic look! Place them in the fridge until ready to cook.
11. Finally, bake the pies for 15–20 minutes until the pastry is golden. Cut a hole in the top of each pie and insert a fish tail. Pop back into the oven for 5 minutes, then serve immediately, with a green salad or vegetables.