

Christmas mince pies

Pinch mix spice
50g dried apricots, chopped
75g dried cranberries
1 knob stem ginger, chopped
1 apple, peeled and chopped
Splash of brandy
Splash of orange juice
200g Mincemeat
1 egg
Milk to glaze
Icing sugar for dusting

Pastry

225g cold butter, diced
350g plain flour
100g golden caster sugar
280g mincemeat
1 small egg
icing sugar, to dust

To make the pastry, rub cold, diced butter into plain flour, then mix in golden caster sugar and a pinch of salt.

Combine the pastry into a ball – don't add liquid – and knead it briefly. The dough will be fairly firm, like shortbread dough.

Refrigerate for 20 minutes before rolling.

Preheat your oven to 180C

Grease a shallow cupcake tray with the butter and set aside. Sprinkle a little flour onto a clean surface and your rolling pin. Roll out half the pastry until it's about 3/4mm

Carefully cut out 12 circles with a pastry cutter or a clean glass tumbler and lay them in the tart hollows on your baking tray. Put the tray in the fridge to chill for half an hour.

Spoon the mincemeat into a mixing bowl and break up with a spoon. Pour in the brandy and orange juice. Add the apple, ginger, dried fruits and mixed spice and mix well.

Roll out the rest of your pastry and, using a smaller cutter or tumbler than before, cut out another 12 circles. These will be the lids for your pies.

Take the pastry bases out of the fridge and fill them just over half full with mincemeat.

Smooth the filling out to the edges. Beat the egg and milk together and brush over the top edge of the pastry. Lay the pastry lids over the top. Crimp the edges with your thumb and forefinger so the lids stick to the bases, and top each pie with a cut-out shape.

Brush once more with the egg wash and bake in the preheated oven for 25 minutes, or until the pastry is cooked through and golden on top. Dust with icing sugar before serving.

