

Steak Pie

My Mom-in-law is a fantastic cook, we are always excited when we are invited round for lunch or dinner at Mom & Dad's house. It's always a big family affair, with all the siblings and their spouses and their children chatting away and laughing... I'm always impressed by how cool and calm my Mom-in-law is and how she manages to feed so many people a delicious meal, without even breaking a sweat... I still have a lot to learn! Fresh off the plane from Greece we were welcomed home with a family dinner of roast pork with all the trimmings ... Hubby and I were in heaven, the food in Greece was lovely but never the same as food from your home country and never nearly as delicious as home cooking made with love by a Mom! So Mom's Pork Roast is a firm favourite, so is her Roly-Poly pudding (worth every inch it adds to your waist line) and her yummy steak pie rounds up my top 3 from her extensive repertoire. Her steak pie recipe comes from a Royco Recipe Book which I have had the pleasure of borrowing (when I asked for her famous pie recipe) and the wear and tear of the book plus the dated illustrations inside, attests to the notion that a good recipe will stand the test of time. Years have come and gone and my Mom-in-law is still making this delicious pie, now so am I, and hopefully after giving it a bash, you will add it to your collection of trusty recipes too! It is amazing that with just these few ingredients, the end result is so meaty and delicious, I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't tasted it for myself first. Be sure to read 'Cooks Tips' at the end of this recipe for my pointers before you get cooking!



Steak Pie Yield: 6 **Ingredients:** 1kg Stewing Beef cut into 5cm cubes 25 ml Flour 750 ml Water (I substitute with 500ml Woolies organic beef stock & 250ml water) 2 Packets Royco Rich Oxtail Soup Mix (you can use other brands too, I have in the past) 300 grms Baby Button Mushrooms (optional) Salt & Pepper Oil for frying 2 Rolls Puff Pastry Defrosted 1 egg beaten **Method:** In a

heavy based saucepan heat the oil until hot and then sear the meat on all sides and in batches. Once all the meat has been seared, return to the pot, sprinkle with the flour and mix to combine. Add the oxtail soup mix and the water / stock and bring to the boil, stirring again to combine. Once it starts to boil, drop to a low heat and simmer with the lid on for between 1.5 – 2 hours or until your meat is tender and a fork easily penetrates it. Add your mushrooms 20 or so minutes before you estimate the meat to be done. Throughout this simmering process, stir every few minutes to avoid the meat sticking to the bottom of the pot – do not leave unattended for long periods of time. It should be a gentle simmer and not a boil, if it is simmering rapidly when you take the lid off, lower your heat further. Adjust the seasoning with salt & pepper near the end of the cooking time, as the sauce will continue to enhance the flavour whilst it is simmering away. Grease a 26cm pie dish or similar Roll out the puff pastry on a floured surface until it is slightly larger than the pie dish. Then hold it over the centre of the pie dish and unroll it into the dish. Lightly press it into the corners with your fingertips and all the way up the sides of the dish. Trim off the excess with a sharp knife. Place in the refrigerator for 30 minutes – this will prevent shrinkage during baking (You can skip this step if you are pressed for time but try and plan ahead). Preheat the oven to 180°C and get the middle oven rack ready Remove from the fridge and prick the pastry all over with a fork (this is called “Docking”). Cover the pie crust with baking paper or greaseproof wax paper, leaving enough over hang so that you can easily remove the paper once done without burning yourself. You need to apply weight on top of the paper to prevent the pastry from puffing up, you can use uncooked rice, dried beans or dry lentils for this purpose if you do not have actual cooking weights – pour on top of the paper and place in the oven for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, remove the weights and paper and if your pastry is still looking very blonde, return to the oven for another 10 minutes without the weights and paper. Finally, pour in your steak filling, cover with more rolled out puff pastry, use a fork to push down the sides and cut a small slit into the middle of your pie, to release steam, as its cooking. Decorate by making pastry leaves or use a cookie cutter on pastry cut offs to decorate your pie (Optional). Brush with the beaten egg and bake for 20 – 30 minutes or until golden brown and your pastry is cooked through. **Cook Notes:**

- The meat is the star of this dish, with so few ingredients, there is no-where to hide so buy your meat from a reputable supplier
- Try to take your meat out of the fridge 30 minutes to an hour prior to cooking – this will render a more tender end result
- Pat your meat dry with carlton towel before commencing with any cooking – this will help the meat to brown and will eliminate excess moisture in the pot
- You should hear a sizzling sound when the meat is placed in the pot otherwise it is not hot enough and you will not achieve the browning result required
- When searing your meat, do not overcrowd the pot as this will result in steaming the meat instead of searing it and you will not create the flavour base required. The searing of the meat, is one of the most important steps to this recipe so don't rush this process
- Should your sauce start reducing too drastically during the simmering process don't be afraid to add more water / stock. At the same token, by the time your meat is tender, if you still have too much liquid in the pot – bring it back to the boil with the lid off for a few

minutes to reduce and thicken your sauce to the desired consistency – just remember you need sauce for your pie so don't over reduce!

- You can always make your steak and sauce the day before and prepare the pastry the following day. As with any stew, the flavours really do intensify over time – it is not just an old wife's tale!