

## Linda's Fish Pie Tastes Like Home with Catherine Fulvio

### *Ingredients*

1 kilo of fish (a mix of pollack, salmon & some smoked fish like haddock)  
1 handful of oats  
1 small onion  
2 handfuls of mussels  
25g butter  
225g mushrooms  
2 bay leaf  
600ml milk  
25g of butter  
25g of flour  
1 or 2 tbsp double cream  
2 tbsp parsley  
1 tbsp dill  
4 hard-boiled eggs  
1.2 kg mash potato  
salt and pepper

### *Method*

Add the mussels into a bowl of cold water and sprinkle in a handful of oats and leave to soak for 3-4 hours or overnight ideally. Drain the mussels and rinse off any oats, make sure all the mussels are still tightly shut, throw away any open ones, place into a dry pan and cook until open, takes 3-4 minutes, remove the mussels from the shell and leave to one side.

Cook the potatoes, then mash them and put to one side.

Hard-boil the eggs by bringing a small pan of water the boil, add the eggs and keep it at a gentle boil, set the timer for 8 mins, cook, then drain and leave to cool in a bowl of cold water.

Cut the filleted fish into bite size bits and place them as a single layer into a large frying pan and cover with milk and season with salt and pepper, cover and simmer gently until the fish is cooked, takes about 4 minutes, once cooked remove fish and set to one side.

Once cool flake the fish making sure to remove all skin and bones and put to one side.

Finely chop the onion, add to a pan over a medium-low heat, stir/shake to prevent

sticking or burning but don't cover the pan, once the onions have gone soft and translucent, remove.

Turn up the heat in the pan, add the mushrooms, season and sauté, once cooked put aside with the onions.

To make a roux melt the butter in a pan, stir in the flour and cook for 1 min over moderate heat, take off the heat, pour in a little of the cold poaching milk, then stir until blended, continue to add the milk gradually, mixing well until you have a smooth sauce.

Bring the liquid to the boil, add the cream, onions, mushrooms, cooked mussels (minus the shell) and all the flaked fish.

Peel and chop the eggs and add to mixture, stir gently and check seasoning, then add the herbs.

Spoon all of the creamy fish mixture into a large oven dish and cover the top with the mashed potato and place the dish into the pre-heated oven Gas Mark 4, 180°C (350°F) for 30 minutes, then place under a hot grill for an extra 5 mins to brown the potato on the top

Garnish with additional parsley.

*To "wet or dry cure" and 'hot smoke' your own fish in a biscuit tin smoker*

Make your own dry fish cure: a 50:50 mix of granulated brown sugar and coarse sea salt or rock salt (avoid fine salt it leaves the fish too salty), also add some coarse ground black pepper & lemon zest.

To cure the haddock, lay a sheet of clingfilm down, sprinkle on a layer of the cure, place the fish on top, and sprinkle over some more cure.

Generally a handful of cure will be enough for a couple of small fish, wrap the fish and cure tight in clingfilm, and place in the fridge overnight.

Remove from the fridge, rinse off the cure using water and pat dry with kitchen towel. Place back in the fridge uncovered for a minimum of 6-8 hours to allow the pellicle to form – this is a sticky, salty surface layer

that helps the smoke particles stick to the fish.

Make your own wet cure: Heat the water to a boil and mix in all the ingredients, add 1 litre of water, to 100g of brown sugar and 100g of salt to a pan and heat until the salt and sugar has dissolved.

Cool to room temperature and then put the brine into the refrigerator and allow it to cool completely, as the brine must be cold when the fish is added.

Pour the liquid into a bowl of wide container and then place your fish into it skin side up and leave to soak for 2-3 hours depending on the thickness of the fish .

When you are ready to smoke, remove from the liquid and pat dry with paper towels and add to the smoker

### *Smoking*

If you don't have a smoker then use an old biscuit tin, wash it out and punch holes in the lid to allow the smoke to escape.

Sprinkle two tablespoons of sawdust (apple wood or similar) on the base of a rectangular biscuit tin or a small handful of bbq wood chips (applewood or others) avoid hickory it's too strong for fish.

Put a wire rack into the tin and lay the fish, flesh side up on top.

Put the tin over a high heat for a minute or so until the sawdust / wood starts to smoulder, or on a gas jet

Place the lid on the tin, reduce the heat and smoke for 5 -15 minutes, turn off the heat and allow to sit unopened for 5 minutes.

Remove the fish from the tin and add to the rest of the fish for cooking in the fish pie.