

May Recipe

Salmon en Croûte

Use a nice big piece of salmon for this pie. It is best to use a cut from the middle of the fish that does not include the tail, as it will cook more evenly. If you are short on time, don't bother with the spinach and cream. Just season the fish with salt and pepper before encasing it in the pastry. A small handful of chopped dill is a very tasty alternative to spinach.

SERVE 6

(1in) around the edge for sealing.

Place your fish onto one of the pastry halves and brush the edges of the pastry with egg. Spread the spinach over the fillet and cover with the other piece of pastry. Gently press the pastry over the fish so it fits snugly.

Trim the edges to about 1cm (½ in), and then press down with your thumb all along the edges to seal the fish into the pastry. Cut four diagonal slashes in the top to let out the steam, and brush the pastry all over with the egg.

Place the salmon en croûte into a non-stick roasting dish and bake it in the oven for 20 minutes.

I like to serve with new potatoes tossed with chopped dill, and baby French beans.

200g (7oz) baby spinach a pinch of nutmeg
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsp double cream
375g (13oz) good-quality butter puff pastry 500g
(1lb) salmon fillet, skinless and boneless
1 egg, beaten

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F /Gas 4). Put a tiny bit of water in a large lidded pot, just enough to cover the bottom. Put it on the heat so the water begins to boil, pile in the spinach and pop on the lid. Cook for 3 minutes, then strain it well in a sieve. Squeeze as much liquid out of the spinach as possible by using a spoon to press the spinach into the sieve. Set aside.

Rinse the pot and return it to the heat. Chop the spinach and plop it into the pot. Stir it around to dry it out further, and then sprinkle it with a pinch of nutmeg and season with salt and pepper. Take the pan off the heat and stir in the cream.

Now cut the pastry in half and roll out both pieces. They need to be big enough to sandwich the fish in the middle, leaving approximately 3cm