



Metfield Bakery

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BLACK PUDDING WITH APPLES AND CHESTNUTS

Serves: Makes about 20 fat puds

Preparation time: 3 hours

Cooking time: 1 hour poaching then 15 minutes grilling/heating through

METHOD

1. Cook the barley and oats by covering them with about a litre each of water and bringing to the boil. The oats can be left to stand and absorb the water once they have been brought to the boil, but the barley must be thoroughly cooked otherwise it will remain chalky in the middle. Leave them to cool. This is best done the night before and then they will have fully absorbed all the water.
2. Take a large pan and pop a tiny bit of lard or fat in it - just enough to prevent the bacon and back fat sticking. Add the bacon and fry till it takes some colour. Stick in the back fat and turn it about in the pan till it starts to go a little translucent.
3. Add the grains, onion, and cream to the pan with the fat mixture, and bring to the boil.
4. Tease the cloves of garlic from their papery shells and pop those in too. Add the herbs and spices and cook them all for a few seconds just to give time enough for the flavourings to aromatise.
5. Then add the blood. A word of warning though - do try and use the blood while still warm as it clots quite fast and you will be left with large livery clots of blood throughout your sausage. There is a way round it though; if you don't mind a finer texture, just blitz it with a stick blender, if you have left the blood for long enough for it to coagulate.
6. Cook the blood now while constantly stirring it, till it starts to go a muddy brown colour, and thickens up. Keep cooking for about 20 minutes on this amount though if you reduce the recipe it will take less time.
7. Add the brandy, and smell. Dip your finger in if you can bear it and taste it. Is it spicy enough? Adjust upwards if you like. The pepper needs to come through, as do the other spices, though perhaps not quite as much. At this stage blend it with a stick blender, then add the cubed or diced apple and the chopped chestnuts.
8. Stop eating it and spread it out onto a large tray to cool. I have found now that the whole thing is a hell of a lot easier to deal with the next day, having allowed it all to cool overnight.
9. Take your sausage stuffer and fill with the cooled mix into the skins. It will probably go everywhere - mine did, but if you persevere and don't over stuff them they should be ok. Tie them with string and loop your sausages whilst gazing at them, thinking how professional they look and how clever you are.
10. Poach them for about an hour in barely simmering water, till they look darker and feel a bit firmer. This works much better if you do it in the oven and there is virtually no danger of them bursting. This will probably be trial and error originally as they can still feel quite soft, but when they cool, they should firm up. I found that having initially poached them for twenty minutes, upon eating them, that some of the flavour had leached out, so I made the poaching liquor very very salty. I then took mine to the local butcher and asked him to smoke them, which you could do too. You could also make little cakes of them and flour, egg and roll them in oat meal, or even better, crushed oat biscuits, though if you do this, it is probably wise to add an egg or two to the mix to bind them as the blood will find it difficult on its own. Grill them and eat them hot with fried apples and mashed potatoes. Die and go to heaven. If you reduce the blood though, they will hold together better, but they will (obviously) taste less and less of blood. Again a word of advice; because they are so loose, the best way of cooking them is to just get a little colour on them in a pan, and then stick them through the oven to heat through. This way of cooking them is much less prone to explosions.

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