



# Metfield Bakery

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## THE PERFECT PORK PIE

**Serves: 16**

**Preparation time: 1 hour 30 minutes**

**Cooking time: 2 hours**

### METHOD

1. You will need to make the pastry first. It really isn't difficult, so don't fret. First of all melt the lard. This is the bit to take care of so that you don't have accidents – hot lard is just that – very hot. Use a large enough pan to give you plenty of room besides the lard. Put the lard into your mixer. Add the cold water, then the dry ingredients, and mix on first speed using the dough hook till the pastry comes together. Then turn up to second and work for about five minutes or until the pastry is shiny. Do not boil the water with the fat. We used to do that and forgot one day to watch it like hawks. It boiled over and the whole thing went off like a bloody rocket. We had to struggle with this raging volcano and get it off the (gas) stove and onto the middle of the floor where we put a fire blanket over it, but it was touch and go for a bit, and very scary. So don't do it despite what other recipes say. If you use a mixer ensure that it has a metal bowl as boiling lard may well melt plastic ones. If you want to make it the old fashioned way, then put the dry ingredients in a heap on your work surface and make a well in it; then add your wet ingredients and gradually draw in the flour from the edges of the crater, till you have incorporated the water and lard. Then knead as you would bread dough till the pastry is shiny. I can't tell you for how long as we use machines. Let the pastry go cold. Yes – cold! Don't believe all the old wives tales about using it before it goes cold, because it will get impossibly hard. It doesn't. It remains pliable and can be rolled out much more easily or formed on a pie form, or by hand. Sorry - I've screwed up on this one and not posted the weights for the pastry - so I've now posted a separate recipe for HWP. Hope this helps (SO)
2. So, take your belly and coarsely mince it. Dice the shoulder and bacon and put into a preheated hot pan. Season the diced meats with some of the mace, pepper, salt and ginger, and fry till they take some colour. Put them aside to cool.
3. Meanwhile caramelize your onions, by placing them in a pan with a little butter, and cook them hard at first stirring all the while, till they wilt a little. Then turn them down and cook very gently till they brown and the sugars caramelize. You can help the process by adding ever such a little brown sugar at this stage. You may find some of the onions have stuck a bit to the bottom of the pan when you've finished. Don't worry, just take them off the heat and let them stand. After half an hour stir the onions a bit. You should find that the caramel on the bottom of the pan will mix into the onions and add a gloriously dark depth of flavour. The more your onions caramelize the more flavour you can get into the pie.
4. Mix your cooled meats, onions and remaining spices together, to make your farce.
5. Roll out your pastry and line a mould or create a base using a pork pie dolly (see the video on how to use this) and fill loosely with the meat. If you line a mould, make sure it overlaps the edges of the mould by a couple of centimetres. Paint or spray (using a garden sprayer that you have bought for the purpose) the edges of the base with water. Roll out a lid slightly larger than the base diameter and fit over the filled base. Crimp in any way you know how – with a fork or your fingers or the back of a spoon.
6. If you have used a pork pie dolly, you will need to support the pie in the oven. Take a strip of silicon paper (not grease proof – it will stick) as wide as the pie is deep and wrap around the pie. Secure with a paper clip, and if you are not overly confident you could also do the same with some thin card.
7. Rest the pie for at least an hour. This will prevent any shrinkage in the pastry and should help to prevent the crimp coming unstuck. Take your prepared egg wash and paint the top.
8. Put the pie in the preheated oven and bake for about two hours. You'll know when its nearly done as you should start to get a wonderfully savoury smell and the pastry will start to look golden.
9. Take the pie out and leave to cool for half an hour. If you've made small pies, they are absolutely amazing to eat still warm. Do so quickly. Otherwise let it slightly cool and make up the jelly. Take the chicken stock and bring to the boil with the trotters. Let them simmer for half an hour. Taste the jelly and season with salt. If your butcher is particularly wonderful or you are sleeping with him, get him to salt the trotters in his brine tub and smoke them hard. This will impart

another delicious layer of flavour to your pie. If you use salted trotters then watch the seasoning in the jelly. It probably will need no extra salt.

10. Cool your wonderful creation overnight, preferably in the fridge. Take it out next day and impress the hell out of your guests. Carve it into thick slices and serve it with bread and butter pickles, or sharp English mustard. You could always make the pickles on this website. Go to the index and find Pete's Pickles which are the most fantastic salted sweet and sour cucumbers. A few dressed crunchy leaves are good too. Go to the index too to discover more fun things to do with trotters and bellies. If you like pies that impress, try the chicken, bacon and spinach pie for a pie with a visually stunning interior.

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