



BENEDICTA'S STEAK AND MUSHROOM PIE

“Have you eaten, Johnny?” she asked, flipping the fan open again.

“No,” he said, suddenly recalling that he was starving. “I hadn’t the chance.”

“Well, then.” The Countess waved one of the footmen over, selected a small pie from his tray, and handed it to her son. “Yes, I saw you talking to Lady Mumford. Kind of you; the dear old thing dotes upon you.”

Dear old thing. Lady Mumford was possibly the Countess’s senior by a year. Grey mumbled a response, impeded by the pie. It was steak with mushrooms, delectable in flaky pastry.

“Whatever were you talking to Joseph Trevelyan so intently about, though?” the Countess asked, raising her fan in farewell to the Misses Humber. She turned to look at her son, and lifted one brow, then laughed. “Why, you’ve gone quite red in the face, John—one might think Mr. Trevelyan had made you some indecent proposal!”

“Ha ha,” Grey said, thickly, and put the rest of the pie into his mouth.

—*Lord John and the Private Matter*, chapter 5,
“Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (A Little Night Music)”

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One of *Outlander Kitchen’s* most popular and time-tested recipes, this pie has a homemade filling of beef and mushrooms in a rich gravy and is topped with store-bought puff pastry. A smart compromise for the time-crunched, multitasking cook in the twenty-first century.

You can also top it with a batch of Vegan Short Crust Pastry (page 13) for a purely homemade pie.

Serves 6

Ingredients

2 pounds (900 grams) beef sirloin or
top round, cut into 1-inch cubes

2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus additional

1½ teaspoons mustard powder

½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus
additional

2 slices bacon, diced	1 tablespoon Mushroom Catsup (page 307) or Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons vegetable oil, plus additional	3 cups Quick Vegetable Stock (page 12) or beef stock
1 large onion, diced	2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
$\frac{3}{4}$ pound (340 grams) button mushrooms, cleaned and sliced	1 bay leaf
2 garlic cloves, minced or grated	1 large egg
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour	1 sheet puff pastry (10 to 12 ounces, or 285 to 340 grams)
12 ounces (355 milliliters) dark, low-hops beer, such as a chocolate porter or stout	

Method

Toss the cubed steak with the salt, mustard powder, and pepper.

In a large pan over medium heat, crisp the bacon, being careful not to overbrown it. Use a slotted spoon to remove the bacon to a plate lined with paper towels. Add enough vegetable oil to the pan to yield 2 tablespoons of fat.

Increase the heat to medium-high and brown the beef in batches, about 5 minutes per batch. Transfer the beef to a plate, add another 2 tablespoons oil to the pan, and sauté the onion and mushrooms until soft and translucent, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds, then stir in the flour and cook for 2 minutes, stirring constantly.

Deglaze the pan with the beer and mushroom catsup, stirring well. Add the stock, reserved beef and bacon, thyme, and bay leaf. Stir well and bring to a boil.⁴

Reduce to a simmer, partially cover, and cook until the beef is tender and the gravy shiny and thick, about 1 hour. Season to taste, then remove from the heat and cool slightly while you prepare the pastry. Remove the bay leaf.

Move the rack to the upper-middle rung and heat the oven to 400°F. Whisk the egg with 1 teaspoon water.

Arrange six 8-ounce (240-milliliter) ovenproof ramekins on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, and divide the beef mixture evenly among them.

Roll out the puff pastry to about an $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness and, with a SHARP knife, cut squares large enough to generously cover the ramekins. Lay the puff pastry tops across the filled ramekins, press gently to adhere to the edge of the dishes, then

brush the tops with the egg wash. Use a sharp knife to poke a small hole in the top of each and bake until golden, 30 to 35 minutes. Rest 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

Alternatively, pour the filling into a 13 x 9-inch baking pan and top with a single sheet of puff pastry. Increase the baking time to 35 to 40 minutes. Rest 15 minutes before serving.

Serve with Salad Greens with Vinegar (page 205). Store leftovers in the fridge for up to 3 days.

Notes

- *To make this recipe gluten-free, replace the all-purpose flour with brown rice flour, whisking it in after the beef has simmered and just before you remove the pan from the heat. Substitute gluten-free beer or red wine for the beer, and ensure the puff pastry is also gluten-free.*
- *For a vegan pie, try the Jackfruit Potpie (page 181).*