ST. STEPHEN'S DAY · DECEMBER 26

St. Stephen's Day hand pies

Prep 30 min **Cook** 25 min **Thaw** 40 min **Total** 1 hr 35 min **Makes** 8 hand pies **Level** Easy

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. The filling stays very hot inside the pastry, and steam can burn when a pie is broken open, so let the pies cool 10 minutes. A grown-up handles the hot oven and the knife. Use Christmas leftovers within 3 to 4 days of cooking, bake until the filling is steaming hot (165°F, 74°C), and refrigerate shared pies within 2 hours.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten), milk, and egg. Puff pastry and pie crusts vary: some are made with butter, and some contain soy, so check the box. Ham and deli turkey can contain added milk or soy, so read those labels too. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

Filling

- 1½ cups (about 200 g) chopped cooked ham or turkey
- 1 cup (100 g) shredded cheddar or Swiss cheese
- ½ cup (75 g) cooked vegetables, finely chopped (peas, carrots, broccoli, or leftover roast vegetables)
- ¼ cup (60 g) cream cheese, softened
- A pinch of black pepper

Pastry

- 1 box (17 oz, 490 g) frozen puff pastry (2 sheets), or 2 refrigerated pie crusts
- A little flour, for rolling
- 1 egg beaten with 1 tbsp water, for brushing

METHOD

1. Thaw the puff pastry following the package directions, about 40 minutes at room temperature, until it unfolds without cracking. Heat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a bowl, mix the ham or turkey, cheese, vegetables, cream cheese, and pepper.
3. On a lightly floured counter, roll each pastry sheet into a 10-inch (25 cm) square and cut it into 4 squares, for 8 in all.
4. Spoon about ⅓ cup of filling onto one half of each square, leaving a ½-inch (1 cm) border. Brush the edges with egg wash, fold the pastry over into a triangle, and press the edges firmly with a fork to seal.
5. Set the pies on the baking sheet, brush the tops with egg wash, and cut a small cross in each top to let the steam out.
6. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, until puffed and deep golden brown and the filling is steaming hot.
7. Cool on the tray for 10 minutes before eating. To share, wrap a few warm pies in foil and a clean towel and deliver them right away, or cool them and tell your neighbor to reheat them in a 350°F (175°C) oven for 10 to 15 minutes.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Stir the filling together
- Brush the edges with egg wash
- Seal the edges with a fork
- Make a card and carry the pies to a neighbor with a grown-up

GOOD TO KNOW

- For a vegetarian version, skip the meat and use 1½ cups (about 200 g) chopped roasted vegetables, or sautéed mushrooms and spinach squeezed dry, with a little extra cheese.
- Freeze unbaked pies on a tray, then pack them in a bag for up to 1 month. Bake from frozen at 400°F (200°C), adding 5 to 10 minutes.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Saint Stephen and Saint Wenceslaus, pray for us, and help us share our Christmas plenty with anyone in need.