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Seafood and cauliflower pie

This is perfect for Christmas or New Year's Eve and can sit in the fridge for a day or two before cooking. Add whatever seafood you fancy — I love smoked haddock, scallops and prawns.

SERVES

4-6 people

INGREDIENTS

200g cauliflower florets
450g potatoes, ideally Maris Piper,

cut into even-sized chunks
350ml whole milk
1 bay leaf
240g undyed smoked haddock
20g grated parmesan, plus extra for the topping
50g butter, plus a knob for the mashed potato topping
1 tbsp capers
1 leek, thinly sliced
35g flour
70ml white wine
A pinch of cayenne pepper
A pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
2 tbsp crème fraîche
A big handful of flat leaf parsley and dill, finely chopped
4-6 scallops, cut in half horizontally

100g peeled prawns, optional
A wedge of lemon, for juice
20g panko breadcrumbs
A handful of roasted hazelnuts, roughly chopped

01 Butter a shallow pie or gratin dish. Cook the cauliflower in boiling water for 3-4 min, or until just tender. Scoop it out with a slotted spoon and run under cold water to stop the cooking. Add the potatoes to the boiling water and cook for 10-12 min until mashable.

02 Meanwhile, pour the milk into a saucepan with the bay leaf over a medium heat and bring almost to the boil. Poach the haddock for a few minutes then remove it and the bay with a slotted spoon, reserving the poaching liquid and turning off the heat.

03 Mash the potatoes with a good knob of butter and splash of milk, salt and pepper and the parmesan until smooth and set aside.

04 Melt 50g butter in a saucepan over a medium heat, add the capers and leeks, and fry for a few minutes until the leeks are soft. Mix in the flour with a wooden spoon to coat the leeks, then slowly pour in the wine, stirring all the time. Add the haddock poaching liquid, stirring to incorporate the flour into the milk, and cook for a few minutes to create a smooth, thickened sauce. Season with a pinch of cayenne and nutmeg and stir in the crème fraîche and chopped herbs, followed by the flaked fish, prawns (if using) and cauliflower. Taste the sauce at this point and add a squeeze of lemon juice if you think it needs some more acidity. If not cooking the pie immediately, leave to cool.

05 Lay the scallops in the buttered dish and pour over the sauce. Top with the potato, scoring with the back of a fork to make ridges. Mix together the panko, parmesan and hazelnuts and scatter over the top. Cover and refrigerate for up to two days.

06 When you're ready, remove the pie from the fridge and let it stand for at least 30 min. Drizzle with olive oil and bake at 170C (190C non-fan) for 25-30 min until piping hot. Finish under a hot grill to crisp up the top and serve with buttered peas ■

