

Traditional Irish Boxty on St. Pat's Day menu

By The Canadian Press

Boxty is one of Ireland's best-known potato dishes and deserves its place at the St. Patrick's Day table. And for that reason, it's made it to the menu in establishments such as those run by **Prime Pubs** in eight Canadian cities.

Here from **Prime Pubs'** executive chef Niels Kjeldsen, based at Fionn MacCool's in Toronto, is the recipe for Boxty being offered this year. He recommends serving a salad with your favourite dressing as a side dish for this recipe.

IRISH BOXTY

375 ml (1½ cups) day-old mashed potatoes

1 egg

Pinch each salt and pepper

250 ml (1 cup) all-purpose flour

Guinness Steak and Mushroom Filling (recipe follows)

In a large bowl, mix potatoes, egg and seasoning until well blended. Add flour and mix until it sticks together.

Divide mixture into 4 portions (about 125 ml/½ cup per portion), shape each into a ball and place on a floured surface. Using a rolling pin, roll each to a 30-cm (12-inch) round. While working, keep Boxties floured to prevent sticking.

Place Boxties into a heavy skillet over medium heat, fry until golden brown on both sides. Placed on a warmed plate and ladle 250 ml (1 cup) of the Guinness Steak and Mushroom Filling on to each Boxty and fold over.

GUINNESS STEAK AND MUSHROOM FILLING

30 ml (2 tbsp) vegetable oil

500 ml (2 cups) diced beef

75 ml (⅓ cup) diced onions

30 ml (2 tbsp) tomato paste

125 ml (½ cup) Guinness

5 ml (1 tsp) brown sugar

5 ml (1 tsp) Dijon mustard

15 ml (1 tbsp) red wine vinegar

2 beef cubes

2 whole cloves

500 ml (2 cups) water

250 ml (1 cup) button mushrooms

45 ml (3 tbsp) cornstarch

90 ml (6 tbsp) water

Salt and pepper

In a large pot, heat oil until very hot. Add beef and brown on all sides. Add onions and tomato paste and cook for 2 minutes.

Add Guinness and cook until it is reduced by half. Add brown sugar, mustard, red wine vinegar, beef cubes, cloves and 500 ml (2 cups) water. Bring to a boil, add mushrooms and simmer until beef is tender, about 1 hour.

In a small bowl, mix cornstarch with 90 ml (6 tbsp) water, add to simmering beef while stirring. Simmer for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Makes 4 servings.

PORTER CAKE

Many Irish Canadians who miss this homemade treat send away for Porter cake, traditionally stored in a tin to help keep the cake moist.

Good luck trying to keep this around — one slice doesn't seem to be enough. Packed with dried fruit and spices, this version will give you more fibre and less flour than the traditional one.

It's a must for St. Patrick's Day eating.

125 ml (½ cup) butter

175 ml (¾ cup) packed brown sugar

250 ml (1 cup) Guinness

250 ml (1 cup) cooked mashed potatoes

375 ml (1½ cup) raisins

175 ml (¾ cup) mixed peel

125 ml (½ cup) dried cherries

15 ml (1 tbsp) grated orange rind

500 ml (2 cups) all-purpose flour

2 ml (½ tsp) baking soda

2 ml (½ tsp) each ground cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves

1 ml (¼ tsp) each ground coriander and allspice

Pinch salt

2 eggs, lightly beaten

In a saucepan, melt butter. Add sugar and beer. Whisk in potatoes. Add raisins, mixed peel, dried cherries and orange rind; bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally.

In another bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, coriander, allspice and salt. Add to fruit mixture and stir in eggs until well combined. Spread in a greased 2-l (9-inch) round cake pan.

Bake in a 180 C (350 F) oven for about 1 hour and 15 minutes or until cake tester inserted in the centre comes out clean.

Let cool completely in pan. Run knife around edges and turn cake out. Wrap well with plastic wrap. Store in cake tin and let stand for 1 day before cutting.

Makes 1 cake or 12 to 16 slices.

Tip: For added moistness, poke the cake with a skewer while still warm and pour 50 ml (1/4 cup) of Guinness over top and let cool completely.

Source: Ontario Potato Board.





CP PHOTO

Fionn MacCool's Executive Chef Niels Kjeldsen serves up a traditional Irish Boxy and a pint of Guinness to kick-start the St. Patrick's Day celebrations Friday Feb. 16, 2007, in Toronto. Boxy is one of Ireland's best known potato dishes and deserves its place at the St. Patrick's Day table. However, it's also being served in Irish pubs such as those run by Prime Pubs which operates a chain in eight Canadian cities.