



Above: Brill and vermouth envelope — the puff pastry helps to keep in all the flavours

Brill and vermouth envelope

Crisp golden puff pastry outside and inside a juicy mixture of flaked brill fillets, rice and mushrooms

MAIN MEAL Serves 4

Overall timing 1½ hours plus overnight marination

Equipment Dish, ovenproof dish, bowl, frying pan, baking tray

Freezing Not recommended

INGREDIENTS

2lb	Brill fillets	900g
10 tbsp	Vermouth	10×15ml
14oz	Packet of puff pastry	397g
4oz	Mushrooms	125g
1	Onion	1
1oz	Butter	25g
1 tbsp	Chopped parsley	15ml
4oz	Cooked rice	125g
	Salt and pepper	
	Lemon juice	
1	Egg	1

METHOD

- 1 Put brill fillets in dish with vermouth. Cover and leave overnight.
- 2 The next day, thaw pastry. Preheat oven to 450F (230C) Gas 8. Put fish and vermouth into lightly greased dish and cook, covered, in centre of oven for 15 minutes. Drain fish, saving cooking liquor, and flake into a bowl.
- 3 Wipe and slice mushrooms. Peel and finely chop onion. Melt butter in frying pan and cook mushrooms and onion for 10 minutes. Drain, add to fish.
- 4 Stir parsley, rice, salt, pepper and lemon juice into flaked fish and moisten with reserved cooking liquor.
- 5 Roll out pastry to a large square. Trim edges and reserve trimmings. Place fish filling in centre of square and brush edges with water. Bring corners to middle to form an envelope and press edges together. Cut 16 small leaves from trimmings. Moisten undersides and place 4 on each pastry seam.
- 6 Place envelope on baking tray. Brush with beaten egg, bake for 40 minutes at 400F (200C) Gas 6. Serve hot.

Brill pâté

This fish, because of its delicate fine flavour, makes an unusual creamy pâté — a very pleasant change from the more usual kipper or mackerel ones. Cream, and white breadcrumbs all contribute to the smooth texture and anchovy essence gives an extra accent to the taste

STARTER Serves 4

Overall timing 15 minutes plus chilling time

Equipment Bowl, small saucepan, dish

Freezing When cold, wrap, label and freeze. Freezer life: 3 months. To use: thaw overnight in fridge or for 6 hours at room temperature

INGREDIENTS

1½lb	Poached brill	700g
4oz	Salted butter	125g
2	Lemons	2
2oz	Fresh white breadcrumbs	50g
3 teasp	Anchovy essence	3×5ml
¼ pint	Carton of double cream	150ml
	Salt	
	Freshly-ground white pepper	
2oz	Unsalted butter	50g

METHOD

- 1 Remove skin and bones from brill. Flake the flesh into a bowl. Melt the salted butter in a small saucepan. Squeeze the lemons.
- 2 Add breadcrumbs, melted butter, lemon juice and anchovy essence to fish. Stir in lightly whipped cream and season to taste. Transfer mixture to dish, smooth top and chill for 30 minutes.
- 3 Melt unsalted butter, allow to cool slightly then pour over the firm pâté. Return pâté to fridge to set for a further 30 minutes. Garnish with a parsley sprig and serve the pâté with thin slices of toast and butter curls.

taste saver

Brill is delicious served cold, with thick mayonnaise. First let it cool in the cooking liquor, drain it well and place it on a bed of lettuce leaves, with sliced cucumber and hard-boiled eggs, or a mixture of diced vegetables