

Skillet Chicken Pot Pie

Moody Monday's: Desperately seeking comfort? We can serve it up in a single skillet. Homemade chicken pot pie is head and shoulders over the frozen stuff we grew up with. Our luscious creamy chicken stew includes the inexplicably underused fresh tarragon and nutmeg. It's not hard to make, but have some hacks that save some time and work: store-bought rotisserie chicken, pre-sliced mushrooms and frozen puff pastry. Cleanup is kept to a minimum by baking the pot pie in the skillet you use to cook the filling. And if you really want a fast weekday meal, make the filling ahead of time, then top with pastry when you want to bake it. It's as easy as, well, chicken pot pie.

See Cook's Note on other crust options.

Ingredients

For crust

- 1 (14-ounce) sheet frozen puff pastry (preferably an all-butter version), thawed
- All-purpose flour, for dusting

For filling

- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 10 ounces cremini or white button mushrooms, stems trimmed, quartered, or halved if small
- Salt and pepper
- 1 onion, diced (about 1¼ cups)
- 2 stalks celery, sliced crosswise (scant 1 cup)
- 5 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 4 cups diced rotisserie chicken (most of the meat from a 2½-pound rotisseries chicken)
- 3 cups frozen peas and carrots
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

For assembly and finishing

- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

special equipment

- 12-inch cast-iron or other oven-safe, heavy-bottomed skillet, or a 2½-quart baking dish (such as 9-inch square)
- pastry brush
- rolling pin

Directions

for crust

Dust a clean work surface with flour. Gently unfold the puff pastry on the lightly floured surface and roll it out with a lightly floured rolling pin until it's about 1 inch wider on all sides of the perimeter of the top of a your baking vessel (so, a 14-inch disc for a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or 11-inch square for a 9-inch square baking pan). Transfer the pastry to a parchment or silicone sheet-lined baking sheet and chill. If you don't have enough fridge space to store the pastry flat, dust it with flour, gently fold in half or quarters, and place on a large plate or small pan that will fit in the fridge.

for filling

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms, toss to coat evenly, and cook, undisturbed, until the mushrooms release their liquid and it evaporates, about 5 minutes. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms turn golden, another minute. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Transfer the mushrooms to a plate or bowl. Reduce heat to medium. Add the remaining 4 tablespoons butter, onions and celery to the skillet. Season lightly with salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until onions soften slightly, about 6 minutes. Sprinkle the 5 tablespoons of flour over the onions and celery and cook, stirring often, to toast the flour, about 3 minutes. Slowly stir in the stock, then the heavy cream, a little at a time, and bring to a simmer. Continue to simmer, stirring often and adjusting heat as needed, until it thickens, about 10 minutes. Stir in the mushrooms, chicken, peas and carrots, tarragon and nutmeg. Cook, stirring, to heat through, about 3 minutes. Adjust seasonings. (If you want to make this ahead, this is the place to stop. Let the filling cool, cover and refrigerate up to a week.)

Remove from heat and set on a foil-lined baking sheet to catch any bubbling over while baking. (If using a baking dish, transfer chicken mixture to the baking dish and set the dish on a foil-lined baking sheet.)

For assembly and finishing

Using a sharp paring knife, cut a 1-inch hole in the center of the pastry. That will allow steam to vent while the dish bakes. Working quickly, carefully place the pastry over the filling in the skillet, stretching it taut and allowing the edges of the pastry to hang over the sides of the skillet. Brush the pastry with the egg wash. Bake for 25 to 35 minutes until pastry is puffed up, deep golden brown and cooked through. Allow pot pie to cool for about 10 minutes before serving.

Cook's Notes

Pre-made refrigerated pie crust dough or biscuits are other classic crust options for homemade pot pie.

That piece of puff pastry you cut out for the vent? Brush it with egg wash and bake it on the baking sheet beside the pot pie. It's your reward for a job well done.

total time: 1 hr 40 minutes plus 10 minutes cooling time

active prep: 65 minutes

serves: 4

difficulty: medium