



TOAD IN THE HOLE

Serves: 4-6

COMMUNITY RECIPE

This is the platonic ideal of the Sunday night supper: undemanding and safe-making, it bolsters as it comforts. But while I love its nursery charm, I have tweaked it a little, not least in that I don't leave the sausages whole, but squeeze them into little patties, which I fry on the hob before blanketing with batter and baking in a ferociously hot oven. I am not trying to create more work - not that squeezing sausages out of their skins is arduous (indeed, it is strangely satisfying) - but I really don't like the way that the sausages, when this is prepared in the traditional manner, go a spooky braised pink as they cook within the batter. Yes, you can give them a start in the hot oven so they sear first, but it never quite seems to do the trick, and this way one doesn't have to return to them. You just fry the little patties, pour the batter over them, chuck in the oven and leave them to it.

Recipe posted by Nollo

Ingredients

350 ml milk (full fat)

4 eggs

1 pinch of salt

250 grams plain flour

400 grams pork sausages (6 in number)

15 ml goose fat (or vegetable shortening or oil)

4 sprigs fresh thyme (plus more for serving if wished)

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C/gas mark 7. Whisk the milk and eggs together with the salt, then whisk in the flour, beating to make a smooth batter. I find this way round makes for a lighter batter.
2. Press the sausage meat out of its casing (you may need to nick the skin with a knife), half a sausage at a time, rolling it in your hands to form a ball and then squash gently to make a little, fat patty. You should get 12 patties from the 6 sausages.
3. Heat the fat or oil in a heavy-based, flame-safe roasting tin on the hob and brown the patties for about 1 minute each side: you need do no more than make them look enticingly brown.
4. With the patties and oil still hot, pour in the batter and quickly drop in the sprigs of thyme. Absolutely immediately put into the oven for about 40 minutes or until the edges of the batter have risen and turned golden, and the eggy middle has set.
5. Serve immediately, scattered with a thyme sprig or two or just a few leaves and with gravy if you feel you can only properly enjoy Yorkshire pud when it's sauce-sogged.