As part of the Christmas Eve special on Channel 4, Gordon Ramsay whipped up some scrumptious mince pies alongside some other tasty Christmas recipes. Make the mince pies yourself using the recipe below. You can make the shortcrust pastry, or just buy a packet to save time.

**Makes 12**

**Ingredients**

**For the shortcrust pastry**
- 200g soft flour
- pinch of salt
- 100g butter
- 2-3 tablespoons of water

**For the mince pies**
- 540g mincemeat (the best quality you can get)
- Orange zest from a large orange
- Couple of tablespoons of Brandy
- Pinch of cinnamon
- 50ml milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 50g caster sugar
- Vegetable oil or butter wrapper for greasing tin

**Method: How to make shortcrust pastry mince pies**

**For the shortcrust pastry**

1. Make sure your butter’s at room temperature to make it easier to work with.

2. Sieve the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl. Cut the butter into small cubes and add to the flour.

3. Using your fingertips, rub the fat into the flour, lifting the mixture up and dropping it back into the bowl - you want to keep the mixture light and airy. Keep going until all the fat is mixed with the flour and has reached a texture that resembles fine breadcrumbs.

4. Sprinkle a little cold water into the bowl and mix through with a knife. Use your fingers to bring
the pastry together: it’s ready when and the sides of the bowl are clean and it’s formed a solid ball. You shouldn’t need to add much more than a tablespoon of water so be careful not to overdo it.

5. Cover the bowl with cling film and leave the pastry to rest in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

For the mince pies

1. Heat the oven to 220C/400F/Gas 6.

2. Mix your jar of mincemeat together with the orange zest, brandy and cinnamon.

3. Lightly grease your patty tins with a small amount of vegetable oil, or any butter paper you may have.

4. Flour your work surface and roll out the pastry as thinly as possible. Cut out approximately 12 rounds with a pastry cutter (most pastry cutters have two sides, one with a greater diameter than the other, use the larger side for the base and the smaller for the lids) and place them in the base of your patty-tins.

5. Prick all the pie bases with a fork to stop them rising. Fill each case with about 3 teaspoons of the mincemeat mix - don’t overfill your cases or the mixture will leak through the pastry when cooking.

6. Brush the pie edges with a little milk. Stamp out another 12 rounds, using the larger end of your cutter, for the lids and place over the mincemeat mix.

7. Pinch the pie edges together to seal. Brush over with egg wash and pierce the tops with a fork. Bake in the oven for approx 20 minutes until golden brown.

8. Remove from the oven and allow to rest for 1 minute before placing on a wire rack to cool.

9. Serve warm with a light sifting of icing sugar on top.

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