**MUSHROOM POT PIE**

The appeal of a single-serving potpie plucked from the supermarket freezer case is not lost on Julia Sullivan, the sous chef at the rollicking [**Pinewood Social**](http://pinewoodsocial.com/) in Nashville. Her mother used to feed the kids a steady diet of suppers built on easy-fix foods like frozen potpies. “My mother was a very post–World War II Southern kind of economical cook,” she says.

Even after Sullivan left her Nashville home for the New York kitchens of Manhattan’s Per Se, Blue Hill at Stone Barns in Pocantico Hills, and the Southern Italian gem Franny’s in Brooklyn, the childhood joy of one’s own personal potpie was hard to shake. One day, when she was using veal trimmings to make a creamy stew called veal banquette for the staff meal at Per Se, it occurred to her that the dish could make a great potpie. Further inspiration for the versatility of the form came from a chestnut-filled number that had a star turn on the menu. “The creaminess of the filling and the pastry is just such a perfect combination,” she says.

When Sullivan headed back to Nashville last fall to help shape the menu at Pinewood Social, she turned once again to the potpie, this time configuring a seasonal main dish that could accommodate the earthy flavors of the bounty of mushrooms that grow wild this time of year in the Tennessee woods, as well as a bagful of creminis from the supermarket. She mixed in root vegetables, herbs, and a splash of sherry vinegar for a hearty filling, topping it off with rounds of flaky, puffy crust to create an impressive fall dish that’s every bit as rich and satisfying as its meat-based forebears.

Her pro tips? Chill the pastry rounds so they are stiff when you press them onto the rim of the individual oven-safe bowls. “Use the warmth of your hand to work the pastry around and make sure it adheres,” she says. The filling should be at room temperature before the lid is added so the pastry won’t begin to steam into a soggy mess before you even get the pies into the oven. And the dough should never touch the filling, so it bakes up light and slightly crisp.

The filling can also be scaled up to anchor one large casserole-size potpie, as Sullivan did for a recent Thanksgiving with her extended family. It was a poetic return to her childhood suppers. “You never really get those flavors out of your head,” she says.

**Mushroom Potpie**  
*(Serves 6)*

**INGREDIENTS:**

1. ¼ lb. butter, cubed
2. 1 cup flour
3. 4 cups mushroom stock
4. 3 tbsp. olive oil, divided
5. 3 cups mixed mushrooms (oyster, maitake, cremini, shiitake), trimmed and quartered
6. 2 carrots, peeled and diced
7. 1 parsnip, peeled and diced
8. 4 cippolini onions, peeled and quartered
9. 2 celery stalks, sliced diagonally into quarter-inch slices
10. 1 tbsp. sherry vinegar
11. 1½ tsp. dried thyme leaves
12. 1 tbsp. chopped parsley
13. 1 tbsp. minced chives
14. Salt, to taste
15. Black pepper, to taste

**Preparation**

Melt butter over medium-high heat in a medium Dutch oven; add flour and whisk until combined. (The mixture should be the consistency of wet sand.) Continue whisking frequently until the roux is golden-brown and has a nutty aroma. Be careful not to scorch.

Slowly whisk cold mushroom stock into the roux until the mixture is creamy and has the consistency of a thick soup. Adjust with additional stock, if necessary, and season with salt and pepper.

In a large sauté pan, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and pan-roast until golden-brown; season with salt and pepper and transfer to a paper towel. Wipe pan clean and repeat the process with carrots and parsnips, cooking until they have some color and are just tender throughout. Wipe pan clean, reduce heat to medium, and add the remaining olive oil. Sweat onions until just translucent. Then add celery and cook until just tender and bright green.

Fold the mushrooms and cooked vegetables into the roux-stock mixture along with vinegar and herbs. Adjust seasoning to taste. Cool to room temperature.

**Pastry Crust**

**INGREDIENTS:**

1. 2½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling
2. 2 tsp. coarse salt
3. 2 sticks unsalted butter, chilled and grated on the large holes of a cheese grater
4. ½ cup cold milk
5. 1 egg
6. 1 tbsp. whole milk

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**DIRECTIONS:**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Lightly flour a countertop and roll the dough to about ⅛-inch thickness. With a paring knife, cut 6 rounds of pastry about 1 inch wider in diameter than your serving bowls.

Whisk together egg and milk to make an egg wash. Brush onto cold pastry rounds.

To assemble potpies, spoon 6 ounces of filling into 6 room-temperature bowls and place dough over the bowls, brushed side down. Carefully fold the edges over the bowls to seal. The pastry should not sag or touch the filling and should have no cracks or tears, or the crust will not rise properly. Brush tops of pastry with egg wash.

Place bowls on a sheet tray and bake for about 20 minutes, or until crust is golden-brown. Remove from the oven and let rest 5 minutes before serving.

