

# Serving Fish Head Pie once a Year



Exercise 1

## Vocabulary

### marvelous

ADJECTIVE

causing great wonder

As he opened the back door, a **marvelous** aroma greeted him

### pastry

NOUN

baked food made with a dough of flour, water and shortening

Bake for ten minutes until the **pastry** is crisp and golden.

### fishing port

VERB

a place at which vessels may arrive and discharge, or take in their cargoes

Port-Louis is an attractive little **fishing port**.

### reverence

VERB

great respect and admiration

The poem conveys his deep **reverence** for nature.

## Exercise 2

# Article

## Serving Fish Head Pie once a Year

On a hot summer day in the Cornish seaside village of Mousehole. In the kitchen of The Old Coastguard hotel, chef Jamie Porter is bent low over a bench, unfolding a marvelous fish fantasy that's all heads, no tails.

Tuck the mackerel heads into the openings of a puff pastry lid, twist the bulging eyes so that they look directly at the sky and egg the crust with soft brushstrokes as if it were a Franciscan fresco.

There weren't many things I had to agree to do when I joined this company," Porter confesses, tucking an open fish lip into the socket of a rapacious jaw, "but preparing the Stargazy Pie was one of them."

Porter hails from Padstow, a town on the north coast of Cornwall, the southwestern tip of the United Kingdom that juts out into the Atlantic Ocean. Mousehole, a tiny fishing port, is located on the south coast of Cornwall.

Perhaps he is used to a more refined cuisine, since he trained with the British television chef Rick Stein at the famous Seafood Restaurant in Padstow and at the Waterside Inn in Berkshire, west of London, together with the internationally famous chef Alain Roux.

But watching Porter work cannot but inspire an awed reverence. Especially if you have just been persuaded to prepare this fantastic fish cake months before the only day of the year when it should be eaten: December 23, at Tom Bawcock's eve party.

Under the dough, Porter has prepared a rich and buttery sauce with smoked pollock, hake, cod, mackerel and herbs. This time the eels, sardines, ling and dogfish are missing, but it all depends on the season. From time to time, Porter upgrades the recipe, adding lobster, mussels, monkfish and even mushrooms.

## Exercise 3

# Ingredients

In this whimsical Cornish dish, whole sardines poke their heads through the crust of a savory pie filled with bacon, hard-boiled eggs, and a mustard-laced custard. This recipe first appeared in the tablet edition of our April 2014 issue with Mary Sue Milliken's story *Forgotten Fish*.

### FOR THE CRUST:

- 2 ¼ cups flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 tsp. salt. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. salt. mustard powder, preferably from Coleman

12 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed and refrigerated  
6 tbsp. ice water

**FOR THE FILLING:**

6 slices bacon, cut into 1" pieces  
2 tbsp. unsalted butter  
1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped  
½ cup chicken broth  
⅓ cup crème fraîche  
2 tbsp. English mustard, such as Colman's  
2 tbsp. finely chopped parsley  
1 tbsp. honey fresh lemon juice  
2 eggs, beaten  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
8 sardines fresh, clean and with the head attached  
3 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and sliced

Exercise 4

## Discussion

1. Which country or place would you like to visit?
2. Have you ever had a flight or trip suspended?
3. What would you do if you witnessed a burning house?

Exercise 5

## Further Discussion

1. What is your favorite pie dish?
- 2.