



PAN-FRIED PEPPERCORN FILLET STEAKS WITH LENTIL AND FETA MASH

When my children returned from boarding school for the holidays, they inevitably chose this for their first home-cooked meal; it's always been a winner in our home. Prepare the mash first, so it is ready and waiting before you start to cook the steaks.

Peppercorn marinade

- 4 Tbsp whole black peppercorns, lightly crushed
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2–3 Tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp salt

Beef fillet

- 1–1.5 kg beef fillet, cut into 6 steaks (each ± 3–4 cm thick)
- Butter, for frying
- 250 g fresh shallots, thinly sliced
- 250 ml pouring cream
- 2 Tbsp dry sherry or marsala (see Note)

Lentil and feta mash

- 5 large potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 3–4 Tbsp butter
- ½ cup (125 ml) milk, warmed
- 400 g can lentils, drained
- 125 g feta, crumbled
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Serves 6

Peppercorn marinade:

- Combine the marinade ingredients in a non-reactive dish. Add the steaks and turn to coat, pressing down lightly so the peppercorns stick to the meat. Set aside to marinate for 30 minutes.

Beef fillet:

- When ready to cook, heat some butter in a large pan on medium and fry the shallots until golden.
- Remove the steaks from the marinade. Place in the pan and brown on all sides. Cook for a total of 4 minutes per side for medium-rare, turning once.
- Turn off the heat and add the cream and sherry or marsala to the pan. Stir through and leave to rest for 1–2 minutes, until the sauce thickens.

Lentil and feta mash:

- Boil the potatoes in salted water until tender, then drain and return to the pot.
- Add the butter and warm milk and mash the potatoes until smooth.
- Stir through the lentils and feta, and season to taste (feta is salty, so taste first before adding salt). Keep warm while you prepare the steaks.

Notes

- Marsala, a fortified wine from Sicily, can be either dry or sweet. If you don't consume alcohol, just omit it.

This recipe has been adapted from 101 Greatest Recipes: Delicious Dishes From Our Food Editors by Abigail Donnelly, Hannah Lewry and Phillipa Cheifitz, published in 2009.