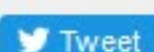
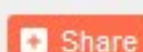
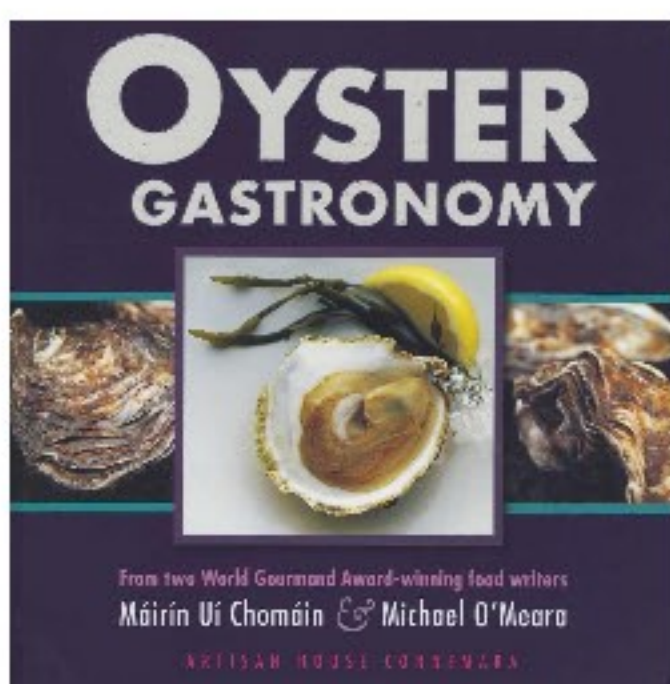


# Georgina Campbell's Cookery Feature - Beef Up Your Kitchen Bookshelf



There's always a rush to the bookshops coming up to Christmas, but this is a calmer time to add to our collections - especially if we're lucky enough to have book vouchers to use. You can never have too many good books about food, and - like the ones that this month's recipes come from - the best ones can inspire us to travel and get the full experience too.

The Connemara publishers Artisan House, for example, came up with a brilliant idea as their **Oyster Gastronomy** (paperback, €15) combines the talents of two of their best known authors, Mairin Uí Chomáin (author of a number of titles, including the original *Irish Oyster Cuisine*, published by A&A Farmar), and Michael O'Meara (*Sea Gastronomy: Fish & Shellfish of the North Atlantic*).



Between them they have produced a lovely collection of accessible recipes ranging from homely dishes that would make great pub grub such as Oyster Casserole or Oyster and Stout Beef Pie (see below) to sophisticated Seaweed Steamed Oysters with Japanese-style Dressing or Roasted Oysters with Zingy and Sweet Quince Jelly.

And the photography is shared between two masters too - Michael O'Meara himself, who is well known for his excellent seafood photography, and the late Walter Pfeiffer, long renowned as one of Ireland's top food photographers, who contributed to Mairin's original *Irish Oyster Cuisine*.

Then there are the background pieces - the informative Introduction by BIM's Richard Donnelly, the profiles of some of Ireland's best known producers of both native and gigas (Pacific) oysters, the sauces and accompaniments - and Betty Murphy's beverage notes too.

Running to just 128 pages, this is not a major tome - but it is surprisingly comprehensive and makes an interesting read as well as an inspiring reference that will make you want see this fascinating food in its natural, and very beautiful, environment.

## Recipe: Oyster and Stout beef pie

Serves 4

12 oysters, shells removed, juices strained and reserved  
2 tablespoons plain flour  
salt  
black pepper, freshly ground  
675g rib beef, cubed  
2 tablespoons sunflower oil  
1-2 onions, finely chopped  
225 g mushrooms, chopped 450 ml stout  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
210g ready-made puff pastry



### Method

Season the flour with salt and pepper. Toss the beef in the flour. Heat the oil in a large, heavy frying pan. Once the oil is hot, add the beef to the pan a little at a time and seal. (Be careful not to overcrowd the pan as this will only create a stewing process.)

Remove the beef from the pan. Fry the onions and mushrooms until soft and then return the meat to the pan.

Add the stout, Worcestershire sauce and oyster juices and season with salt and pepper. Mix well, cover and simmer until the meat is tender (about 1½ hours).

Remove from the heat and allow to cool completely. Add the oysters.

Preheat the oven to 200 °C / 400 °F / gas mark 6.

Grease a deep pie dish. Pour the mixture into the pie dish.

Cover with the pastry, leaving a slight overhang around the edge of the dish. Crimp the edges firmly and cut an air vent in the centre of the pastry.

Bake in the centre of the oven for 15 minutes.

Reduce the heat to 180 °C / 350 °F / gas mark 4 and bake for a further 30 minutes until the meat is heated through. Serve while hot.