



Peppercorn Steaks

Peppercorn steak, or 'Steak au Poivre' as the French call it. Some recipes cook the steak with the peppercorns pressed into it, I prefer this way as you get good flavour searing the steak without burning the peppercorns.

- 4 good sized steaks – sirloin, fillet, rib-eye or T-bone all work well.
- 50g/2oz butter
- 2 shallots, or half an onion finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp whole black peppercorns, lightly crushed
- handful finely chopped parsley
- 50ml/2fl oz brandy
- 200ml/7fl oz beef stock
- 250ml/9fl oz double cream

Season the steaks, to taste, with some salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Heat half the butter in a frying pan over a medium heat. When the butter is foaming, add the seasoned steaks and fry for 1-2 minutes on each side (for medium rare), or until cooked to your liking. Remove from the pan and set aside on a warm plate covered with foil to rest.

Add the remaining butter to the pan the steaks were cooked in. When the butter is foaming, add the shallots/onion and fry for 1-2 minutes, or until softened.

Add the garlic and peppercorns and cook for a further 2-3 minutes, or until softened.

Add the brandy and light with a match. Allow the flames to flare up and cool down. (Keep the pan well away from your face and eyes and surrounding objects).

Add the stock and cook for another few minutes until reduced by half then add the cream and parsley and return to a simmer.

Cook for another few minutes until reduced further, then season to taste..

Pour the sauce over the steaks and serve with mashed potatoes and veg of your choice.
