

THE BRITISH COOKBOOK



PHAIDON

WELSH RAREBIT

WALES

*

WELSH RAREBIT

WELSH RABBIT/CAWS POBI

Thick buttered toast spread with a generous and sumptuous melting mixture of Cheddar, mustard, stout and Worcestershire sauce, the Welsh rarebit is a British treat par excellence. Serve at breakfast or lunch, or even as a post-dinner ‘cheese course’. The rarebit’s peculiar name has prompted much speculation about its origin, but most of the conversation has centred around the dish’s English name. The earliest references to the dish, from the eighteenth century, call it ‘rabbit’ (and not rarebit), but it wasn’t until Hannah Glasse’s 1747 cookbook, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*, that a recipe for the Welsh version (along with Scottish and English ones) was given. However, the name Caws Pobi (‘roasted cheese’), dates back even further. In 1547, in his *The First Book of the Introduction of Knowledge*, writer and physician Andrew Boorde typifies the Welsh saying ‘I am a Welshman... I do loue cawse boby (sic), good rosted chese’.

WALES

*

WELSH RAREBIT

WELSH RABBIT/CAWS POBI

Serves: 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 10–15 minutes

{X}

- 120 ml/ 4 fl oz ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) stout
 - pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon English mustard powder
or 1 tablespoon English mustard
- 175 g/ 6 oz Cheddar or any sharp, tangy hard cheese, grated
 - good glug of Worcestershire sauce, plus extra to serve
 - 1 egg yolk
- 4 thick slices white sandwich bread

WALES

*

WELSH RAREBIT

WELSH RABBIT/CAWS POBI

- * Preheat the grill (broiler) to its highest setting and line a large baking sheet with baking (parchment) paper.
- * Bring the stout to the boil in a medium saucepan, then boil for another minute to reduce slightly. Add the cayenne pepper and mustard and whisk together to combine.
- * Remove from the heat and slowly beat in the grated cheese. Add a good glug of Worcestershire sauce and mix well. Finally, beat in the egg yolk and leave to cool.
- * Toast the sandwich bread before smearing them with generous portions of the cheesy paste. Arrange the bread on the prepared baking sheet and grill (broil) for 3–4 minutes, or until golden brown and bubbling. Serve with more Worcestershire sauce.