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by Liz Robb

Shepherd's pie with sweet potato mash



Ingredients

1 tablespoon of sunflower oil
2 large onions
500g extra lean minced lamb
400g white potato
500g sweet potato
2-3 carrots
200g frozen peas
250g chestnut mushrooms
400 ml lamb or beef stock
1 tablespoon of marmite
2 tablespoons of tomato puree
1 heaped teaspoon of beef gravy granules
Salt and freshly milled black pepper
1 heaped tablespoon of low fat crème fraiche
A dash of paprika
A knob of butter

Preparation

1. 1. First prepare the vegetables. Peel and chop the onions. Peel and cut the carrots into small dice. Peel the white and sweet potatoes and chop them into large chunks. Wipe and chop the mushrooms.
2. 2. Preheat the oven to 190 degrees, 170 degrees fan oven.
3. 3. In a large saucepan, heat the sunflower oil and gently cook the onions for 5 minutes until soft and just beginning to brown. Add the minced lamb and cook for about 10 minutes, breaking it up and stirring, until it has browned. Push the onion and meat to one side, tip the pan the other way and spoon off and discard most of the fat.
4. 4. Meanwhile, heat a large pan of water and boil the white potatoes for 10 minutes. After that, add the sweet potatoes and boil for about another 10 minutes, until they are soft. Be careful, sweet potatoes do cook quite quickly!
5. 5. At the same time as you put the sweet potatoes in, steam the carrots separately for 10 minutes and boil the peas until just cooked.
6. 6. When you have taken the fat from the mince, next stir in the chopped mushrooms. Add the beef stock, the tomato puree and the marmite. Sprinkle on the gravy granules and stir in to add a little thickness. Cook gently for a few minutes, stirring, then season to taste.
7. 7. Drain the peas and add them to the minced meat, together with the carrots, stirring to combine everything.

8 8. Drain the white and sweet potatoes and mash until smooth with the crème fraiche, butter, paprika, salt and plenty of black pepper.

9 9. Tip the meat mixture into an ovenproof dish then fork the sweet potato onto it, starting round the edges of the dish and working into the middle until covered. Fluff up the top with a fork then bake for 20-25 minutes, until bubbling hot. Serve with lots of green vegetables!

Cooks Note

This is a hearty, homely dish that is really tasty and satisfying but lower in carbs and fat than many versions of shepherd's pie.

The sweet potato is packed with nutrients, containing vitamins B6, C, D and especially A, iron and magnesium, contains less calories and carbs than the white potatoes, and is also low on the GI scale. This recipe also includes additional vegetables, onions, mushrooms, carrots and peas; I also served it with a variety of green vegetables, brussel sprouts, green beans and broccoli, easily providing me and my family with our five a day!

You can use minced beef instead of lamb if you prefer, choosing the lean variety if you can, and remembering to drain off any excess fat. I've used the minimum of oil and butter, and low fat crème fraiche to give the dish a creamy flavour instead of my usual grated cheese topping.

Makes: 4 people