

Posted on 4 May 2015

by Liz Robb

Braised Liver Casserole with Creamy Mash



Ingredients

Liver:

500g thinly sliced lambs liver
3 tablespoons of plain flour Salt and freshly milled black pepper Sunflower oil 2 large white onions 3 carrots 1 stick of celery 1 large leek 600ml beef stock 150g chestnut mushrooms A splash of Worcestershire sauce Half a teaspoon of fresh oregano
Creamy mashed potato: 800g potatoes 50g butter 100ml crème fraiche A splash of milk Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

1. Method:
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3. 1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees or 160 degrees fan oven.
4. 2. Prepare the vegetables. Peel the onions, chop them in half and slice them thinly. Peel the carrots, cut them in half lengthways and slice them thinly. Slice the celery thinly too, peel and slice the leek then wash and chop the mushrooms.
5. 3. Cut the liver into pieces. Sprinkle the flour onto a large plate and season well with salt and pepper. Place the pieces of liver in the seasoned flour then turn each one to make sure it is coated.
6. 4. Heat a tablespoon of oil in a large frying pan and cook the onions gently over a low heat for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until soft but not brown. Add the chopped carrots, celery and leek and cook for another 2-3 minutes. Stir in the mushrooms at the end then tip the vegetables into a casserole dish.
7. 5. Heat 1-2 tablespoons of oil over a medium heat, then fry the floured liver pieces for about a minute on each side to seal them. You will probably need to do this in two batches, so you may need to add a little more oil if the pan is too dry
8. you don't want the liver to burn. Add the liver to the vegetables in the casserole dish.

9 6. Pour a little of the hot beef stock into the pan and stir to get up the crusty bits of liver, then tip it into the casserole dish along with the rest of the stock. Chop the oregano finely and sprinkle into the dish, add a splash of Worcestershire sauce then season with salt and black pepper. Stir gently to mix the liver and vegetables, without breaking the pieces of liver, then cook in the preheated oven for about 45 minutes, or until everything is cooked through. Check the casserole after about 30 minutes

10 the gravy should be thickening nicely, but if you want a thicker gravy just stir in a teaspoon of cornflour mixed with a little water.

11 - If you don't have fresh oregano, dried will do. You could also try sage, thyme or mixed herbs if you prefer. Some recipes also suggest adding crushed garlic.- Sometimes liver casserole is cooked with the addition of tomato in some form, either fresh chopped tomatoes, canned, tomato puree or even a spoonful of tomato ketchup!

12 - This dish is traditionally served with bacon

13 if you want to include this ingredient, either cook lardons with the onions and add to the casserole, or grill slices of bacon until crisp and serve on top at the end.

14 Mashed Potatoes: 1. Peel the potatoes and cut them into chunks of a similar size. Put them into a pan of cold, lightly salted water and bring to the boil. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, until they are tender.

15 2. Drain the potatoes in a colander and steam dry them by placing a clean tea towel over them to absorb the excess moisture.

16 3. Heat the crème fraiche and the milk gently in the potato pan, turn off the heat, add the potatoes and the butter, cut into small pieces, and then mash them well together until really smooth. Season to taste. If you want to reduce the fat content, reduce the amount of butter and use a very low fat crème fraiche or just semi-skimmed milk. If you want it to be even more indulgent, use double cream and more butter!

Cooks Note