RECIPE

Cottage Pie

A beef, lentil and vegetable cottage pie under browned mashed potatoes, a make-ahead dinner for a cold evening.

MAKES

8 servings US Metric

TOTAL

1 h 45 min

Ingredients

- [ ] 1 lb lean ground beef (90% lean)
- [ ] 1 large onion, diced
- [ ] 3 carrots, peeled and diced
- [ ] 2 celery ribs, diced
- [ ] 3 garlic cloves, minced
- [ ] 2 tbsp tomato paste
- [ ] 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- [ ] 1 ½ cups low-sodium beef broth
- [ ] 2 cups cooked brown lentils, unsalted
- [ ] 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- [ ] 1 tsp dried thyme
- [ ] 1 bay leaf
- [ ] ½ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 1 cup frozen peas
- [ ] 2 lb russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks

Method

1. Put the potatoes in a large pot, cover them with cold water, and add a good pinch of salt. Bring to a boil, then simmer until a knife slides in with no resistance. A mile up, water boils at about 203 °F, so that takes a few minutes longer than the sea-level 15 minutes: about 20.

2. Meanwhile, set a deep 12-inch oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Add the beef and break it up as it cooks. Cook until no pink is left and the meat reads 160 °F on a food thermometer, about 8 minutes. Spoon off all but 1 tablespoon of the fat.

3. Add the onion, carrots and celery. Cook 6 minutes, stirring, until the onion is soft. Add the garlic and the tomato paste and let them sizzle for a minute. Then sprinkle on the flour and stir for another minute.

- [ ] 4 tbsp olive oil
- [ ] ½ cup whole milk
- [ ] 1 tsp salt, for the mash

4. Pour in the broth and the Worcestershire sauce, and stir in the lentils. Add the thyme, bay leaf, ½ teaspoon salt and the pepper. Simmer uncovered for 15 to 20 minutes, until the gravy is thick and a spoon leaves a trail. The simmer runs a quarter longer here than at sea level. Take out the bay leaf and stir in the peas. Turn the heat off.

5. Heat the oven to 400 °F. Drain the potatoes and put them back in the hot pot for 1 minute to dry. Mash them with the oil, the milk and 1 teaspoon salt until smooth.

6. Spoon the potatoes over the filling in dollops and spread them to the edge so the filling is sealed. Rough up the top with a fork; the ridges brown.

7. Set the skillet on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake 25 minutes, until the gravy bubbles at the edge and the ridges are golden. The middle should read 165 °F. Rest 10 minutes before you cut it.

8. Cool leftovers within 2 hours, then refrigerate up to 4 days. To freeze, cut the cooled pie into squares, wrap each, and freeze up to 3 months. Reheat until it reads 165 °F in the middle.