RECIPE

Lentil and sweet potato shepherd's pie

A meatless shepherd's pie for a cold dinner: lentils, mushrooms and vegetables under a sweet potato mash made with olive oil and skim milk, no butter or cream.

MAKES

6 servings US Metric

TOTAL

1 h 35 min

Ingredients

- [ ] 1 tbsp olive oil, for the filling
- [ ] 1 large onion, diced
- [ ] 2 medium carrots, diced
- [ ] 2 medium stalks celery, diced
- [ ] 8 oz white mushrooms, sliced
- [ ] 1 tsp garlic powder
- [ ] 2 tsp dried thyme leaves
- [ ] 1 tsp smoked paprika
- [ ] 2 tbsp no-salt-added tomato paste
- [ ] 1 cup dry green or brown lentils, rinsed
- [ ] 1 cup frozen peas
- [ ] 1 tbsp cider vinegar
- [ ] ½ tsp salt, for the filling
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper, for the filling
- [ ] 680 g sweet potatoes, peeled (about 1¾ lb before peeling, our kitchen estimate), cut in 1-inch chunks

Method

1. Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them in 1-inch chunks. Set them in a steamer basket over 1 inch of water, cover, and steam 25 to 30 minutes, until a fork slides in with no push. Water boils near 203 °F at 5,300 ft, so allow a quarter longer than the usual 20.

2. While the potatoes steam, heat the 1 tbsp of oil in a deep 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Cook the onion, carrots and celery for 6 minutes, until the onion is soft. Add the mushrooms and cook 6 minutes more, until their liquid has cooked away.

3. Stir in the garlic powder, thyme, paprika and tomato paste. Cook 1 minute, until the paste darkens a shade. Add the lentils and 3 cups of water. Stir, scraping up anything stuck.

- [ ] ¼ cup skim milk
- [ ] 1 tbsp olive oil, mashed into the topping
- [ ] ½ tsp salt, for the topping
- [ ] 1 tsp olive oil, brushed on top
- [ ] 3 cups water, for cooking the lentils
- [ ] 1 inch of water, for steaming the potatoes

4. Bring to a boil, turn down to a steady simmer, and cover with the lid cracked. Cook 40 minutes instead of the usual 30 (simmered food takes about a quarter longer here), stirring every 10 minutes. It is done when the lentils are tender and the pan holds a thick stew with no loose water. If it is still wet, simmer uncovered 5 minutes.

5. Heat the oven to 425 °F; oven temperatures are not changed by altitude. Stir the peas, vinegar, ½ tsp salt and the pepper into the lentils. Spoon the filling into a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and smooth it level.

6. Mash the steamed sweet potato with the 1 tbsp of oil, the skim milk and ½ tsp salt until smooth. Spoon it over the filling in dollops and spread it to the edges. Rake the top with a fork and brush with the 1 tsp of oil.

7. Bake on the middle rack 25 minutes, until the edges bubble and the ridges are browned. The filling should read 165 °F in the center. Rest 10 minutes; it firms as it cools.

8. Cool leftovers no more than 2 hours, then refrigerate. Reheat portions to 165 °F, in a 350 °F oven or the microwave.