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Healthy Shepherd's pie

Recipe by: Norma MacMillan



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Ready in **1 hour 5 min**

Picture by: Norma MacMillan

In this version of a long-time family favourite, the minced lamb filling contains lots of vegetables and red lentils, giving a rich flavour and texture. A generous serving of peas will make the meal even more nutritious.

Ingredients

Serves: 4

1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

450 g (1 lb) lean minced lamb

1 large onion, finely chopped

3 carrots, finely chopped

3 celery sticks, thinly sliced

2 leeks, thinly sliced

1 tbsp tomato purée

1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

360 ml (12 fl oz) lamb or beef stock, preferably home-made

100 g (3½ oz) split red lentils

3 tbsp chopped parsley

parsley sprigs to garnish

Potato and parsnip topping

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) floury potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) parsnips, cut into chunks

75 ml (2½ fl oz) semi-skimmed milk

25 g (scant 1 oz) butter

salt and pepper

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Preparation method

Prep: 45 min | Cook: 20 min

1. Heat the oil in a large heavy saucepan. Add the lamb and cook over a high heat, stirring well with a wooden spoon to break up the meat, for about 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Push the meat to one side of the pan and add the onion. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onion is softened and lightly browned.
2. Add the carrots, celery and leeks and stir well, then add the tomato purée, Worcestershire sauce, stock and lentils. Increase the heat and bring to the boil, stirring frequently. Partially cover with a lid, then reduce the heat to low and simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. While the meat mixture is cooking, preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F, gas mark 6) and prepare the topping. Place the potato and parsnip chunks in a saucepan and pour over boiling water to cover by 5 cm (2 in). Bring back to the boil, then reduce the heat and cook for 15–20 minutes or until the potatoes and parsnips are very tender. Heat the milk in a small saucepan until hot.
4. Drain the potatoes and parsnips well, and return them to the pan. Pour the hot milk over them, then mash them until they are completely smooth. Beat in the butter and season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Remove the meat mixture from the heat, add the chopped parsley and seasoning to taste and stir well. Spoon into a large ovenproof dish, about 2.6 litre (4½ pint) capacity. Top with the mashed vegetables, spreading in an even layer. Bake for 20 minutes or until bubbling and lightly browned. Serve hot, garnished with parsley sprigs.

Another idea

Replace the lamb with lean minced venison or wild boar. Omit the leeks and stir 250 g (8 1/2 oz) fresh or frozen peas into the meat mixture after it has simmered for 15 minutes. In the topping, replace the parsnips with celeriac.

Plus points

Carrots provide vitamin A in the form of beta-carotene. Cooking carrots makes it easier for the body to absorb and use the beta-carotene on offer. * This well-balanced dish of lean meat, vegetables and pulses provides plenty of soluble fibre, mainly from the lentils but also from the parsnips, carrots and leeks. Soluble fibre controls levels of cholesterol and sugar in the blood.

Each serving provides

A, B1, B6, B12, C, E, folate, niacin, potassium, zinc * B2, calcium, iron * selenium

Nutrition

Calories 570 kcal

Protein 37 g

Fat 20 g

Saturated Fat 9 g

Carbohydrates 64 g

Sugars 20 g

Fibre 13 g

Last updated: 26 Feb 2018