

Vegetarian Shepherd's Pie

By **Samantha Seneviratne**

Time 1¾ hours

Rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (3393)



Meredith Heuer for The New York Times

French green lentils (Puy lentils) make a hearty base for this vegetarian shepherd's pie. They may be slightly harder to find than other lentils, but they're worth the extra effort. Unlike brown or red lentils, green lentils retain their shape and texture after cooking, which means they stand up well to a long simmer and this rich potato topping. Store-bought vegetable stock can vary greatly so be sure to buy one with a pleasant flavor that isn't too sweet. (Note: Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese contains rennet, so it is not vegetarian. Use a vegetarian Parmesan or leave it out. If you leave it out, be sure to season the potatoes well with salt and pepper.)

INGREDIENTS

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

For the Topping

2 tablespoons kosher salt,
plus more for seasoning

2 pounds russet potatoes,
peeled and quartered
(about 3 large)

6 tablespoons unsalted
butter

PREPARATION

Step 1

In a large pot, bring a gallon of water and 2 tablespoons salt to a boil over high heat. Add potatoes to boiling water and boil for about 15 to 20 minutes, until soft; a knife should go in with almost no resistance.

Step 2

Meanwhile, prepare the filling: In a 10-inch oven-safe skillet with high sides or an enameled cast-iron braiser over medium-high heat, bring the

½ cup whole milk
½ cup sour cream
½ cup packed grated
Parmigiano-Reggiano
cheese or vegetarian
Parmesan (optional)
Freshly ground black
pepper

For the Filling

¾ cup French lentils

For the Filling

4 sprigs thyme
3½ cups vegetable broth
1 teaspoon kosher salt,
plus more for seasoning
4 tablespoons butter
8 ounces sliced mixed
mushrooms, such as
button, cremini, and
shiitake
1 large leek, white part
only, thinly sliced (about
1½ cups)
2 medium carrots, peeled
and diced (about 1 cup)
2 cloves garlic, minced
Freshly ground black
pepper
2 tablespoons tomato
paste
2 tablespoons flour

lentils, thyme and 2 cups of the broth to a simmer
with 1 teaspoon salt. Reduce the heat and continue
to cook the lentils, partly covered, until they are
tender and most of the liquid is absorbed, about 20
minutes. Transfer the lentils to a bowl.

Step 3

Finish the topping: In a small saucepan or a
microwave oven, heat 6 tablespoons of the butter
and milk together until butter melts. Drain
potatoes well and return to pot. Using a masher or
a ricer, mash hot potatoes until smooth. Mix in the
hot butter mixture and sour cream just until
blended. Stir in ½ of the Parmigiano. Season to
taste with salt and pepper. Cover and set aside.

Step 4

Finish the filling: Heat the oven to 375 degrees.
Melt the butter in the 10-inch skillet over medium-
high heat. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring
often with a wooden spoon, until they are deep
golden brown, about 8 to 10 minutes. Reduce the
heat to medium and add leeks, carrots and garlic,
and continue to cook until tender, another 10
minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add
the tomato paste and stir, cooking until it is well
combined, another 2 to 3 minutes. Sprinkle flour
over the mixture, stir and cook for 1 minute. Add
remaining 1½ cups broth, cooked lentils and peas,
and cook until thickened. Remove thyme stems
and stir in lemon juice to taste.

Step 5

Top the mixture with dollops of the mashed
potatoes, then spread them out over the top. (Or
transfer the lentil mixture to a 3-quart casserole
dish and spread into an even layer, and top with
potatoes.) Sprinkle with the remaining
Parmigiano. Transfer to the oven and, if the
mixture is at the top edges of your pan, set a foil-
lined baking sheet underneath the pan to catch

1 cup frozen peas, thawed

1 to 2 teaspoons fresh
lemon juice

any drips. Bake the pie until the potatoes have begun to brown and the edges are bubbling, about 30 minutes. Let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before serving.

Private Notes

Leave a Private Note on this recipe and see it [here](#).