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Shepherd's Pie

Serves 2

This recipe is a great way to get a packet of minced meat go further and using Quorn mince makes it a brilliant vegetarian option that all the family will love. Feel free to use a leek or a couple of shallots instead of an onion and add an extra carrot if you've no celery.



Ingredients

1 onion
2 carrots
2 celery sticks
2 garlic cloves
40g butter
200g lean steak mince (or for a vegetarian option use 200g fresh or frozen Quorn mince)
1 tbsp plain flour
1 tbsp tomato puree

½ chicken or vegetable stock cube
1 tbsp Worcestershire or soy sauce (for vegetarian option use soy sauce)
100g frozen peas
3 large floury potatoes (Rooster or Maris Piper)
4 tbsp milk
100g sugar snap peas
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method

Using a small sharp knife, cut the onion in half and peel off the skin, then finely chop. Peel the carrots and cut into dice with the celery. Peel the garlic and use a garlic crusher or grate on the fine side of a box grater.

Heat a frying pan over a medium heat with half of the butter. Tip in the onion, carrots, celery and garlic, stirring to combine. Cook for about 5 minutes until softened, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon.

Add the mince to the pan and cook for another 3-4 minutes or until browned, stirring occasionally and breaking up any lumps with a wooden spoon. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute, stirring. Then stir in the tomato puree and allow to cook out for another minute. Dissolve the stock cube in 250ml of boiling water (if you are making the vegetarian option you'll need 350ml of boiling water) and pour into the mince mixture with the Worcestershire or soy sauce, stirring to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer and then cook for 10 minutes until thickened, stirring occasionally. Stir in the peas and place in a small ovenproof dish.

Preheat the oven to 180C / 350F / gas mark 4. Peel the potatoes and cut into dice. Place in a saucepan half filled with water over a medium heat and add a pinch of salt. Cook for 10-12 minutes or until tender. Check by piercing a piece with the tip of a sharp knife and you should feel no resistance. Tip into a bowl and mash with a potato masher until smooth. Season with pepper, then beat in the rest of the butter with the milk. Spoon the mash on top of the mince, starting with dollops around the edges and finishing with the middle. Spread around with a table knife until you have a nice even layer and then bake for 30-40 minutes until piping hot and golden brown.

About 5 minutes before the pie is due to come out of the oven; put a saucepan fitted with a petal steamer over a medium heat. Add the sugar snap peas and cook for 1-2 minutes until just tender. Drain and arrange on plates with the Shepherd's pie to serve.

Prepare Ahead

This recipe can be made up to 3 days in advance and kept covered with clingfilm in the fridge. It can also be frozen for up to 1 month. The recipe can also be scaled up so you could make a double batch and then freeze individual portions in suitable containers. Defrost on the bottom shelf of the fridge before reheating in the oven or microwave once until piping hot.

