

Shepherd's Pie



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Servings: 8

Notes:

- Traditionally, shepherd's pie is made with ground lamb and this recipe should be called cottage pie, but almost nobody is going to know or care. If you want to be accurate, sub an equal amount of ground lamb.
- This recipe doubles and halves well. If you're doubling, it's a good idea to roast in a 13"x9" pan or two 9"x9" dishes instead of one. If halving, you could use something smaller, like a loaf pan, or several small glass containers.
- I recommend grating the carrot and onion instead of cutting them manually. Alternatively, if you'd rather have a less uniform texture of the meat and vegetable component, you can do a small dice on the carrot and onion.

- If you can't have/find Yukon gold, or other waxy potatoes, you can use almost any potato here. You also don't necessarily need to peel them - just be sure to wash them if you aren't planning on peeling them.
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Special Equipment Needed

- Ricer (optional)
- Microplane (Rasp style grater/zester)

Ingredients

- 2.5 Pounds Yukon gold potatoes (or other similarly waxy potatoes), peeled and quartered
- 1/2 Cup heavy cream
- 1/2 Cup Butter
- 2 Pounds ground beef
- 1 Large Carrot, grated or finely diced
- 1 Large Onion, grated or finely diced
- (Optional) 1 Cup assorted vegetables, like peas, corn, green beans, etc. These can be fresh or frozen.
- 2 Tablespoons tomato paste
- 3 Cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 Tablespoon fresh rosemary
- 1/2 Tablespoon fresh thyme
- 1 Cup dry red wine
- 1 Cup chicken broth
- 1 to 2 Ounces parmesan, finely grated
- Salt
- Pepper
- Olive oil

Directions

1. Cover peeled and quartered potatoes in a large pot with a half inch of water.
2. Bring potatoes to a boil and cook until very tender. You should be able to very easily poke a fork into the potato, meeting nearly no resistance.
3. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees.
4. While the potatoes are boiling, in a large pan (10-12 inches ideally), heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium high heat.

Step 5 is the only step where the meat will get any kind of browning, so be sure to give it enough time and heat to sufficiently brown!

5. Spread your ground beef through the pan in a single layer - don't stir yet! We want to allow the underside of the beef to gain some color. Let the meat rest on the bottom of the pan for 2 to 3 minutes. After the time is up, check the underside of a small piece - if it's

- browned, move on; if it's not browned enough, you should give it more time, and possibly more heat, to keep letting it brown!
6. Begin to break up the ground beef into as small pieces as you can with a wooden spoon or turner. Cook the ground beef until no pink remains.
 7. Remove the ground beef from the pan - if there isn't a lot of fat remaining in the pan, add a tablespoon of olive oil and return the pan to heat.
 8. Add your carrot and onion and season with a pinch of salt - the salt will draw moisture from the vegetables, speeding up the cooking process.
 9. Saute the carrot and onion until softened and lightly browned, about 2 to 3 minutes.
 10. Add the tomato paste, minced garlic, rosemary, and thyme to the pan and cook until fragrant - be very careful to not allow the garlic to burn! If you see the garlic getting too dark too quickly, move to step 11 immediately.
 11. Deglaze the pan with the wine, being sure to scrape any accumulated fond.
 12. Return the beef to the pan and cook the mixture until the liquid level has reduced by about half. If using additional vegetables, add them now.
 13. Add the chicken broth and continue reducing until the filling is able to slightly hold itself up if running a spoon through the pan. If the pan seems too dry, add a little more chicken broth.
 14. Turn off heat to the potatoes and drain them.
 15. Before returning the potatoes to their pot, put cream and butter into the pot and allow the butter to melt with the residual heat from the pot. If the butter doesn't completely melt, it's okay.
 16. Return the potatoes to the pot. If desired, you can alternatively pass the potatoes through a ricer for an extremely smooth consistency.
 17. Mash the potatoes, cream, and butter together to your liking; you may need to add additional cream/butter at this step, but traditionally the mashed potatoes in this dish are on the leaner side. Taste for seasoning and add salt as needed.
 18. Taste meat filling for seasoning and add salt as needed.
 19. Place meat filling in a 9"x9" baking dish, spreading evenly.
 20. Top meat filling with mashed potatoes, spreading evenly.
 21. Using a fork, fluff the top of the mashed potatoes to create as much surface area as possible - the better this is done, the more texturally interesting the final product will be.
 22. Grate parmesan evenly over the mashed potatoes.
 23. Roast the pie for about 20 minutes, or until the top is browned to your liking. If you'd like extra browning on the top, turn your oven's broiler on high for a few minutes before removing the pie from the oven, being extra attentive as the broiler is likely to burn your pie.
 24. Allow the pie to cool for 15-20 minutes before serving.

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