

Lamb Shepherd's Pie with Chipotle Sweet Potatoes

Source: 2002 Cooking Light recipe, adapted considerably

Carolyn T's
Cookbook

Servings: 18



2 1/2 pounds ground lamb, lean cut
2 whole sweet onions, Maui or other type, chopped

1 1/2 cups carrot, chopped

5 cloves garlic, minced

2 whole zucchini, minced

1 cup celery, chopped

1 1/2 cups mushroom, chopped

2 1/2 cups frozen peas, defrosted

1 cup chopped tomato, canned, in juice

1/3 cup fresh parsley, minced

1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce

3 tablespoons tomato paste

1/2 teaspoon cracked black pepper

1 teaspoon salt, or to taste

POTATO TOPPING:

2 whole chipotle chiles canned in adobo, minced

2 1/2 pounds potatoes, Yukon Gold preferred

1 pound yam, or sweet potatoes

1 cup milk

2/3 cup ricotta cheese

Serving Ideas: This casserole is easy for freezing ahead. Sometimes potatoes get a bit soft and runny when they've been frozen, but once they've been heated again they'll be just fine. If you are freezing one or more of these casseroles, put a piece of plastic wrap directly onto the potatoes and push it in so it's touching everywhere, even in the corners. This will prevent freezer burn from sitting on the potatoes.

Suggested Wine: A hearty red wine

Categories: Lamb

Carolyn T's Blog:

<http://tastingspoons.blogspot.com>

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 321 Calories; 17g Fat (46.6% calories from fat); 16g Protein; 27g Carbohydrate; 4g Dietary Fiber; 53mg Cholesterol; 275mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 1/2 Grain(Starch); 1 1/2 Lean Meat; 1 Vegetable; 0 Non-Fat Milk; 2 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.

Yield: 3 casseroles

Notes: Shepherd's Pie has been a favorite of mine since my first trip to Britain in 1977, so anytime I find a new version of it I'm glad to try it. Historically, in Britain, the Pie is made with lamb, but it can be made with ground beef as well. If you use the very leanest beef, it won't have a whole lot of flavor, unfortunately. I usually increase the amount of vegetables called for in this. If you use the Maui onions, you'll notice a sweetness to the meat and vegetable section, so you may prefer to use traditional yellow or white onions instead. The original recipe called for just sweet potatoes on top, but I thought that might be a bit too sweet, so mixed them, using about half of each. That, combined with the chipotle chile, gives the potatoes a very rich color.

Description: British comfort food with a Latin twist.

Preparation Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 2 hours 30 minutes

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add chunks of the potatoes and yam; reduce heat and simmer until yam is done and remove those pieces. Continue boiling the potatoes until they are tender, then drain and set aside to cool slightly.

2. While the potatoes are simmering, in a large frying pan heat a little olive oil and add the onion, celery and carrot and sauté for about 7-10 minutes. Cut up the zucchini, mushrooms and garlic and add to the pan, and cook for another 5-10 minutes until zucchini is barely done. Add the parsley, tomatoes, tomato paste, season with salt and pepper and cook for just a few minutes.

Remove the vegetables to a bowl and set aside. Drain the frying pan and add the ground lamb and sauté it until it is thoroughly cooked. Drain the meat onto a paper towel if any grease needs to be blotted. Clean out the pan a little bit with paper towels, then add back the lamb and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to a simmer, then add all of the vegetables and heat through.

3. Combine the yam and potatoes and using a mixer, whip them until there are no visible lumps. Add the milk, chipotle chiles and ricotta cheese and mix until just combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon the lamb mixture equally into 3 casserole dishes. Spoon the potato mixture on top and using a spatula or flat spoon, push into the corners and more or less "seal" the potatoes to the sides of the casserole dish. This last step really isn't required, but it keeps the meat and vegetable portion from drying out. You may, if you want, add some grated Cheddar cheese to the top of the potatoes, but it's not really necessary.

4. If baking immediately, bake for 30 minutes at 400°. If you refrigerate the dish first, it will take nearly an hour to heat it through. Sprinkle the top with additional parsley when serving it. If heating leftovers, it doesn't take all that long to heat - about 2 minutes in the microwave for a serving.