

Lentil Shepherd's Pie

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Makes about 10 servings

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Hearty lentils and veggies are layered with creamy mashed potatoes for a comforting and classic dish. Perfect for a big family, or a small family that wants leftovers, or for a holiday dinner. Easily halve this recipe by following quantities in parenthesis.

INGREDIENTS volumes in () are for a half recipe

For the lentil-veggie mixture

- 550 g (275 g) dried brown lentils, washed and sorted
- 3/4 lbs (1/3 lbs) carrots, diced - about 4-5 large
- 1 (1/2) large onion, diced
- 1 lbs (1/2 lbs) mushrooms, such as cremini or baby bella, chopped in food processor (*see photo in post for reference. See footnote if omitting*)
- 4 (2) cloves garlic
- 2 T (1 T) fresh thyme
- 3 cups (1.5 c) vegetable or mushroom broth
- 2 cups (1 c) fire roasted tomato puree
- 2 T (1T) tomato paste
- 3 T (1.5 T) vegan Worcestershire sauce
- 2 cups (1 cup) fresh shelled peas or frozen
- 2 cups (1 cup) fresh corn kernels or frozen

For the mashed potatoes

- 3 lbs (1.5 lbs) potatoes, skins left on
- 1 cup (1/2 cup) cashew pieces (*see footnote if leaving out*)
- 1/4 c (2 T) water
- 1/2 t (1/4 t) salt
- 2 cloves (1 clove) garlic
- 3 T (1.5 T) nutritional yeast
- 1.5 - 2 cups (3.4 - 1 cup) soy milk, or plant based milk of your choice
- Paprika
- Fresh thyme, for serving

DIRECTIONS

1. Bring 1 cup of water to a boil. Place the cashews (if not using, skip to step 2) in a small bowl and then pour the hot water over.
2. Heat a large dutch oven pot over medium low heat and add the onion, carrot, and mushrooms plus 1/4 cup water. Cook the vegetables, stirring frequently, about 5 minutes. Add the lentils, broth, tomato puree, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, garlic, salt, pepper, and thyme. Stir well to combine and bring to a rapid boil. Once boiling, cover with lid. Reduce heat to a very low and gently simmer 15-20 minutes until lentils are tender.
3. Meanwhile, cut potatoes into quarters and add to a large pot filled with salted water. Cover and bring to a boil. Cook until potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes from the time you turn on the heat. When done, drain the potatoes and return them to the pot.
4. While potatoes are cooking, drain the cashews and place in food processor with the water, salt, garlic and nutritional yeast. Process until it makes a paste. This is the cashew butter. Set aside.
5. Once the lentils are done cooking, stir in the peas and corn. Spread the mixture in a large baking dish.
6. By now, the potatoes should be done. Test them by stabbing a potato with a pairing knife. If you are met with little to no resistance, they are done. Drain. Return to the pot and mash. Add the cashew butter and mash well, adding the soy milk gradually. You may not need all of the milk. Add until your desired texture is achieved. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.
7. Spread the potatoes on top of the lentil mixture. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake for 15-20 minutes, if desired. Serve sprinkled with fresh thyme.

Notes:

- Use a digital scale to measure quantities
- Leftovers will last for several days
- You may also be able to freeze this recipe, however I have not done this.
- If you do not want a big batch, then make half of this recipe. The volumes are in parenthesis.
- If you do not want to use the mushrooms, then add additional 275 g lentils (*137 g*) for total of 825 g (*412 g*)

- If you want to omit the cashews - grate the garlic with a microplane grater so it is fine. Mix this into the potatoes with salt, pepper, nutritional yeast, and soy milk or your milk of choice.