

Vegetarian Shepherd's Pie

Vegetarian

Serves 4-6



FOR THE TOPPING

- 2 T kosher salt, plus more for seasoning
- 900 g potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 84 g unsalted butter
- 120 ml whole milk or tonyu
- 123 g plain yogurt
- 50 g grated parmesan cheese
- Freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE FILLING

- 225 g French lentils (brown lentils will be OK)

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- 4 sprigs thyme
- 820 ml vegetable broth
- 1 tsp salt, plus more for seasoning
- 56 g butter
- 230 g sliced mixed mushrooms, such as button, cremini, and shiitake
- 1 large leek, white part only, thinly sliced (about 1½ C)
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and diced (about 1 C)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 T tomato paste
- 2 T flour
- 150 g frozen peas, thawed
- 1 to 2 tsp fresh lemon juice

1. In a large pot, bring a 3.8 liters **water** and 2 T **salt** to a boil over **high heat**.
2. Add **potatoes** to boiling water and boil for **about 15 to 20 minutes**, until soft; a knife should go in with almost no resistance.

Filling:

3. In a 25-cm oven-safe skillet with high sides over **medium-high heat**, bring the **lentils**, **thyme** and **475 ml of broth** to a simmer with 1 **tsp salt**.
4. **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.

Topping:

5. In a small saucepan or a microwave oven, heat **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 **yogurt** just until blended. Stir in **½ of the parmesan**. Season to taste with **salt** and **pepper**. Cover and set aside.

Finish:

6. Heat the oven to **190°C**.
7. Melt the **56 g butter** in the 25-cm skillet over **medium-high heat**.
8. Add the **mushrooms** and cook, stirring often with a wooden spoon, until they are deep golden brown, **about 8 to 10 minutes**.
9. 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**.
10. Add the **tomato paste** and stir, cooking until it is well combined, **another 2 to 3 minutes**.
11. Sprinkle **flour** over the mixture, stir and cook **for 1 minute**.
12. Add remaining **350 ml broth**, cooked **lentils** and **peas**, and cook until thickened.
13. Remove thyme stems and stir in **lemon juice** to taste.
14. 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.)
15. Sprinkle with the remaining **parmesan**.
16. 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 any drips. Bake the pie until the potatoes have begun to brown and the edges are bubbling, **about 30 minutes**.
17. Let **stand at room temperature for 15 minutes** before serving.