

Shepherd's pie

Serves 4

450 g lamb mince
½ teaspoon thyme
2 tablespoons tomato puree
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 dessertspoon cooking oil
30g flour
¼ Savoy cabbage, finely shredded
2 parsnips, cubed
¼ swede, cubed
2 carrots, cubed
salt and pepper
280 ml vegetable stock (made from stock cube)

for the topping

680g cooked and mashed potatoes
2 egg yolks
55g cheese, grated

In a casserole dish heat the oil and gently cook the onion for 2-3 minutes. Then turn the heat up, add the lamb, and brown it well, stirring it around. Next sprinkle in the flour, stir it in to soak up the juices, and then add the tomato puree. Allow to cook for 10 minutes, before the stock is added. Then add the thyme and simmer gently until cooked.

Lightly steam the savoy cabbage, parsnips, carrots and swede. These vegetables can either be mixed in with the minced lamb or layered alternately on top of the mince in an ovenproof dish.

For the topping, mix the cooked potatoes, egg yolks and cheese together and then place on top of the other ingredients.

Bake at 180 degrees C for 25 minutes.

Sausages with colcannon potatoes, Yorkshire puddings and onion gravy

Serves 4

450g sausages - cook as per instructions until done.

Colcannon potatoes

900g potatoes

1/2 Savoy cabbage, finely shredded

splash of milk

1 tablespoon of butter

bunch of spring onions, finely chopped

Peel the potatoes and cut into chunks. Place into a pan, cover with water and boil for about 15 minutes until soft. During the last 8-10 minutes, add the cabbage. When cooked, drain and mash with a splash of milk and the butter. Stir through the spring onions.

Yorkshire puddings

75 g plain flour

2 eggs

75ml milk

50ml water

lard

Sift the flour into a bowl, break the eggs into this and then add the water and milk and beat together. Heat the oven up to gas mark 7 and then place a small amount of lard in each section of a bun tin and place in the oven for 15 minutes until the fat is melted and sizzling hot. Pour the batter into each of the sections of the tin with the sizzling hot fat in and then place in the oven on the highest shelf for 25 minutes until golden and crisp.

Onion gravy

2 tablespoons of vegetable oil

1 onion, sliced

2 tablespoons of flour

300ml vegetable stock (from stock cube)

1 tablespoon of thyme leaves

Heat the oil in a saucepan and cook the onion for 5-10 minutes until lightly golden and softened. Stir in the flour; then gradually add the stock. Add the thyme leaves, bring to the boil and simmer and thicken for 5 minutes.

Pineapple upside down cake

Serves 4

25g butter or margarine.
50g Demerara sugar
4 pineapple rings
glace cherries

Melt the butter or margarine and then stir in the Demerara sugar.
Spread this mixture over the base of a 20.5 cm round cake tin.
Arrange pineapple slices in the tin and place a halved glace cherry, shiny side down in the centre of each ring.
Cover with the sponge mixture.

For the sponge:
100g margarine
100g caster sugar
100g self raising flour
2 eggs

Cream the sugar and margarine together until light and fluffy.
Beat in the eggs one at a time, adding a little flour with each.
Gently fold in the remaining flour.

Bake for 30-35 minutes at gas mark 4 until firm to the touch. Turn out onto a warmed serving dish.
Serve with custard (sachet).

Fruit crumble

100g self raising flour
50g margarine
50g sugar
fruit and sugar for filling

Place sweetened fruit in an ovenproof dish.

Rub margarine into the flour until it resembles breadcrumbs.

Add the sugar and mix thoroughly with a knife and spread over the fruit.

Smooth over the surface.

Bake in the oven at gas mark 5 for about 30 minutes until fruit is cooked and the top is golden.

Serve on its own or with cream, ice cream, or custard.

Mushroom stroganoff

Serves 1 (multiply by however many people)

6 mushrooms (washed)
dessert spoon of olive oil
knob of butter
1 onion, finely chopped
2 teaspoons of crushed garlic
½ cup of whipping cream
2 tablespoons of white wine
salt
paprika

Warm the butter and oil in a pan and add the onions.
Sweat over low heat.
Add the mushrooms and cook for 2 minutes.
Add the white wine, garlic and whipping cream.
Season with a pinch of salt and paprika.
Gently cook for 5 minutes until the sauce is reduced by half.
Serve with garlic bread.

Tomato soup

2 tablespoons of butter
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 celery stick, finely diced
1 small carrot, peeled and finely diced
2 tablespoons of flour
1 kg tomatoes, skinned, seeded and chopped
juice of the tomatoes
500ml of chicken stock
1 tablespoon of tomato puree
1 tablespoon of fresh basil leaves
2 tablespoons of chopped thyme
1 bay leaf
100ml of white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons of sugar
handful of basil stalks
100 ml of double cream

In a large heavy based saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat.

Add the onion, garlic, celery and carrot and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, about 3-5 minutes.

Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes, without letting it colour.

Tip in the tomatoes along with their juice, and add the stock, tomato puree, basil, thyme and bay leaf.

Bring to a simmer, cover, and cook for 20 minutes.

Remove and discard the bay leaf.

Season with salt and pepper.

In a separate small saucepan heat together the vinegar, sugar and basil stalks and cook briskly until reduced by half. Strain and reserve.

In the food processor or blender, puree the tomato soup until smooth. Return to the pan and reheat. Stir in the double cream.

Add enough of the vinegar reduction to sharpen.