

The Lighter Shepherd's Pie

For the Topping

2 medium heads cauliflower, chopped (florets only) OR 2 (16-oz.) bags frozen, steamable cauliflower
6 oz. cheddar, shredded (we use an Irish cheddar, but regular is just fine)
1 large egg yolk
1 oz. cream cheese
 $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. Kosher salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
2 tbs. unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled

For the Filling

2 tbs. EVOO
1 medium yellow onion, diced
4 carrots, peeled and chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 lbs. lean ground lamb
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. smoked paprika
1 tbs. tomato paste
3 tbs. flour
2 tbs. Worcestershire
2 tsp. fresh rosemary, chopped (or 1 tsp. dried rosemary)
1 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped (or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dried thyme)
2 cups beef stock
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups frozen peas
 $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. Kosher salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

To Make the Topping - Can be made up to 2 days head of time (store covered in the fridge)

In a steamer, steam the cauliflower florets until fork-tender, about 30 minutes. **OR** In a large pot of salted water, boil the cauliflower florets for 30 minutes, or until fork-tender. Drain well. **OR** Cook 2 bags of frozen cauliflower according to package directions (usually 6 minutes each). Allow cauliflower to cool slightly.

In a food processor, combine the cauliflower, shredded cheddar, egg yolk, and butter. cream cheese, and egg yolk. Puree until cheese is melted and cauliflower is smooth. Add in the cream cheese, $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. Kosher salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. ground black pepper, and puree until smooth. While the food processor is on, slowly drizzle in the melted butter until combined.

To Make the Filling

Preheat the oven to 375.

In a large Dutch oven or oven-proof pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat until glistening. Add the onion and carrots and cook until tender, stirring occasionally (about 8 minutes). Add the garlic and cook until fragrant (about 1 minute), stirring occasionally. Add the ground lamb, crumbling to break the pieces into smaller bits. Sprinkle the paprika over the lamb mixture. Cook until the lamb is browned, stirring occasionally (about 10 minutes).

Make a little hole in the middle of the lamb mixture and use a paper towel to soak up any excess fat (usually takes 2 times to get up all the fat we don't want). In that same hole, place the tomato paste in the center. Brown the tomato paste for just a minute until it's fragrant, then stir the tomato paste into the whole mixture.

Sprinkle the flour over the whole thing and stir to combine. Add the Worcestershire, herbs, and beef stock. Bring to a simmer, then lower the heat to medium-low. Stir in the peas, $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. Kosher salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. freshly ground black pepper. Cover and allow to cook until the mixture thickens (about 15 minutes).

Spread the cauliflower mixture evenly on top of the lamb mixture and place, uncovered, in the oven. Bake at 375 for 20 minutes until the cauliflower starts to brown.

Turn on the broiler and broil for about 3-5 minutes, or until the cauliflower gets golden-brown on top. Let rest 5 minutes before serving.

Garnish with parsley. Serve with Worcestershire.

To make ahead

Assemble the whole pie and keep in a 200 degree oven until you're ready to serve. Broil the top for 3-5 minutes until it's golden-brown.



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