

Cottage Pie

For the base:

2 tbsp sunflower oil

500g beef mince

1 large onion, finely chopped

1 carrot, chopped

2 celery sticks, chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 tbsp plain flour

1 tbsp tomato purée

100ml red wine

400ml beef stock

1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

few thyme sprigs

For the topping:

1kg potatoes

100ml milk

50g butter

Resources: 2 large saucepans, wooden spoon, knives, vegetable peeler, masher, measuring jug, tablespoons, scales.

1. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a large saucepan and fry the mince until browned. Set aside as it browns. Put the rest of the oil into the pan, add the vegetables and cook on a gentle heat until soft, about 20 mins. Add the garlic, flour and tomato purée, increase the heat and cook for a few mins, then return the beef to the pan. Pour over the wine and boil to reduce it slightly before adding the stock, Worcestershire sauce and herbs. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, for 45 mins. By this time the gravy should be thick and coating the meat. Check after about 30 mins – if a lot of liquid remains, increase the heat slightly to reduce the gravy a little. Season well, then discard the thyme stalks.

2. Meanwhile, make the mash. In a large saucepan, cover the potatoes in salted cold water, bring to the boil and simmer until tender. Drain well, then allow to steam-dry for a few minutes. Mash well with the milk and butter, then season with some salt and pepper.

3. Spoon meat into an ovenproof dish. Spoon on the mash to cover. To cook heat oven to 190C and cook for 25-30 mins, or until the topping is golden.

