

## Simple Shepherd's Pie

Recipe 100 of 365

Creamy homemade mashed potatoes top a simple mixture of ground beef and onions for this homey, hearty shout-out to the last days of winter in places like New York state's Adirondack mountains, where last weekend brought still more snow. This is also a relatively inexpensive meal.

TIME: About 1 hour (not all active time)

MAKES: 4 to 6 servings

2 medium russet potatoes  
2 teaspoons olive oil  
1 onion (red or white), diced  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 pound ground beef  
1 tablespoon tomato paste  
1/2 stick unsalted butter (about 1/4 cup)  
1/2 cup heavy cream  
1/2 cup milk, plus more, if needed  
Paprika, for garnish (optional)

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Place potatoes in a saucepan and add water to cover. Bring to a boil and simmer until the potatoes are completely tender all the way through (just about when the skins begin to split), 30 to 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, start the meat: heat a large skillet over medium heat. When hot, add the oil, then the onion, and season with salt and pepper. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring. Add the garlic, and cook for a minute or so, then add the beef and cook, stirring frequently and using a wooden spoon to break the pieces up, until the meat is completely cooked through, about 10 minutes. Drain off any excess fat. Add the tomato paste, stir to combine, and season to taste again with salt and pepper.

When they're cooked through, drain the potatoes. Add the butter, cream, and milk to the empty potato pan, and cook over low heat until the butter has just melted. Peel the potatoes while they're still hot (use a dishcloth or an oven mitt to protect your hands, if necessary), add them to the pot with the milk, and mash thoroughly, adding a little more milk, if necessary, to achieve a mashed potato consistency that's a little softer than what you'd put on a plate. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Pile the meat into an 11" x 7" baking dish, and smooth it into an even layer. Add the potatoes, and spread them out so they reach all the way to the edge of the dish on all

sides. Sprinkle with paprika and bake on the top rack for 20 minutes, or until just beginning to brown. Let rest 5 to 10 minutes before serving.