

Modern-Day Hutspot

Recipe 274 of 365

Hutspot is a Dutch dish traditionally eaten on October 3rd, the day during the Eighty Year's War in 1574 when (as the story goes) a Dutch kid released water from the dikes surrounding the town of Leiden, flooding the fields where the attacking Spanish soldiers had made their camp and forcing the Spanish to leave much of their food, including lots of cooked potatoes, behind. (The Dutch celebrate each year with a holiday called *Leiden Ontzet*.) According to our Dutch friends, the dish is normally a big mashed-up pot of carrots and potatoes and onions, but when our version came out of the oven, with soft cooked carrots and partly mashed potatoes and shimmering specks of onion (not to mention a heavy dose of pork), it was surprisingly beautiful. So we skipped the mashing, and decided to call it Modern Day *Hutspot*.

MAKES: 4 generous servings

TIME: Unknown. Perfect for a dinner party, with four cooking.

2 pounds pork bratwurst (plain or cheese-flavored)
2/3 pound thick-cut bacon (we used the peppered kind), cut into small cubes
2 large onions, finely chopped
5 cloves garlic, very thinly sliced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
Salt and freshly ground pepper
5 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, each cut into 8 pieces
1 1/2 pounds large carrots, cut into 3/4" pennies

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Preheat a large skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add the bratwurst, and brown on all sides (about 5 minutes per side), rolling them over only when they release readily from the pan. (Cheese sausages may stick a bit; encourage them to turn after about 5 minutes per side.) Set aside.

Meanwhile, heat a Dutch oven or large, ovenproof soup pot (you'll need something with a lid) over medium heat. When hot, add the bacon, and cook until almost crispy, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate. Add the onions, garlic, and thyme to the bacon grease. Season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, for about 5 minutes, or until the onions begin to soften.

When the onions are soft and the bratwurst have been seared, add the potatoes, carrots, and cooked bacon to the pot. Stir to combine with the onions, season with a bit more salt and pepper, and place the bratwurst right on top of the vegetables. Cover the pot and bake for 1 hour 15 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft and the bratwurst are cooked through. Pile the vegetables into bowls, and top with the sausages.