

Hidden-Veg Beef Cottage Pie

A proper Monday comfort classic, with grated carrot and red lentils tucked into the mince.



Serves	100 (about 180 g a portion)
For 30 portions	Multiply every quantity by 0.3
Prep	50 minutes
Cook	1 hr 30 mins (incl. 30 mins baking)
Dietary	GF* and DF* with swaps. Not vegetarian
Nut-free	No nuts or peanuts used

Ingredients (100 portions)

Ingredient	Quantity	Product code and pack
FILLING		
Rapeseed oil	250 ml	203699 Country Range Rapeseed Oil (4x5L)
Onions, finely diced	3 kg	810596 Fresh White Onions (1x1kg) or 101991 Greens Diced Onions, frozen (4x2.5kg)
Carrots, grated	4 kg	810548 Fresh Carrots (1x1kg)
Beef mince (5% fat or lean)	8 kg	710124 Thomas Stratton Bulk Minced Beef 95VL (1x5kg). Halal: 750100 (1x1kg)
Red split lentils, rinsed	1.2 kg	250111 Triple Lion Red Split Lentils (4x3kg)
Plain flour	300 g	203838 Country Range Plain Flour (6x1.5kg). GF option: 200127 Doves GF Plain White Flour
Tomato puree	400 g	203005 Tomato Puree (24x130g)
Chopped tomatoes (tinned)	5 kg	203692 Country Range Chopped Tomatoes (6x2.5kg)
Beef stock, low salt, celery-free, made up	4 litres	200324 Maggi Bouillon Beef, Gluten Free (2x2kg). Check label for celery and salt
Dried mixed herbs	20 g	203649 Country Range Dried Mixed Herbs (4x190g)
Ground black pepper	10 g	203616 Country Range Ground Black Pepper (4x500g)
TOPPING		
Potatoes, peeled and cut	18 kg	810540 Elveden Fresh British Potatoes (1x25kg)
Butter	1 kg	001056 Meadow Churn Unsalted Butter (40x250g) or 001055 Salted
Whole milk, warmed	2 litres	000109 Whole Milk (4x2L)
Mature cheddar, grated	1 kg	001517 Country Range Grated Mature Cheddar (10x1kg)

Product codes are shopping suggestions only. Check current labels for allergens, gluten-free status and vegetarian suitability. Stock not verified.

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Method

- 1. Prep ahead.** Boil the potatoes in unsalted water until tender, about 20 to 25 minutes. Drain well and steam dry for 5 minutes, which stops watery mash.
- 2. Brown the mince.** Heat the oil in large tilting pans or brat pans. Add the mince in batches (overloading steams rather than browns) and cook until well coloured. Add the onions and carrots and cook for 10 minutes until softened.
- 3. Build the sauce.** Stir in the flour and cook for 2 minutes. Add the tomato puree, tinned tomatoes, lentils, herbs, pepper and stock. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 30 to 40 minutes, stirring often, until the lentils have melted into the sauce and it is thick and glossy.
- 4. Mash.** Mash the potatoes with the butter and warmed milk until smooth. Season with pepper only.
- 5. Assemble.** Divide the filling between 1/1 gastro trays (65 mm deep, about 12 to 13 portions per tray). Spread the mash on top, rough it up with a fork, and scatter over the cheddar.
- 6. Bake** at 180°C (fan 160°C) for 25 to 30 minutes until golden. Check the core temperature reaches at least 75°C.
- 7. Hold and serve.** Hot hold at 63°C or above and serve within 2 hours. If made in advance, cool quickly (within 90 minutes, to below 8°C, ideally using blast chilling), cover, label and refrigerate. Reheat once only to a core temperature of 75°C or above.

Chef's tips

- **Portion:** about 180 g for primary-aged children. Go lighter (around 140 g) for Reception and Key Stage 1.
- **Getting children to try it:** call it "secret-veg pie" on the menu board. Children are often happier when they feel in on the joke.
- **Reducing waste:** leftover mash makes the next day's side. Freeze any unused filling (cooled, labelled and dated) within the day.

Swaps

Gluten-free: replace the flour with 150 g cornflour and use a gluten-free stock. **Dairy-free:** use a dairy-free spread and an unsweetened, fortified plant drink in the mash, and omit the cheese. Check labels (oat drinks may contain gluten and some plant drinks contain soya).

Allergens (all 14 flagged)

Contains	Cereals containing gluten, Milk
Check the label (varies by brand, may be present)	Celery, Sulphites, Soya
Not ingredients in this recipe	Crustaceans, Eggs, Fish, Lupin, Molluscs, Mustard, Tree nuts, Peanuts, Sesame
Nut-free	No tree nuts, peanuts or nut products are used

Nutrition note (estimate): about 1.5 portions of vegetables per serving from the carrots, onions and tomatoes, plus protein, iron and fibre from the lentils and beef.

Need the ingredients? Order everything on this card from Brook Street Foodservice, delivered next day across the South East of England. Visit www.brookstreetfoods.co.uk.

Written with the School Food Standards (England) in mind. Please check against your school's own policies and local authority guidance. Allergen information is based on generic ingredients: always check labels for the exact products you use. Quantities are chef estimates and should be test-cooked at scale.