

Rustic Mash

A Lewis original, with assistance from Sydney Seagull

This recipe includes potatoes, kumara, carrots, buttercup, peas and corn.

With luck this is what the served meal can look like (top right) if you don't overfill the plate (remember with this recipe there are usually seconds).

Set out all the ingredients before starting. You can substitute some items. Probably best not to leave out potatoes and put chocolate in instead.

Onion and garlic are optional. If you put onion in then add it to the pot to cook from the get go. This will ensure the onion blends in. Best not to do this with garlic, as cooking garlic this way would destroy the flavour. Garlic can be crushed and added later.

Wash the veg. Don't peel the veg, apart from the carrots. Yes, I know everyone wants to peel the buttercup. Grey pumpkins should be peeled, buttercup squash, no. The green skin looks good in the mash. The carrots are peeled, otherwise their edges will turn brown after grating. -

The potato, kumara and buttercup are all chopped into small cubes all about the same size. This ensures they will all cook at the same time. If you want onion, pop it in now.

Keep checking once the whole lot has started to boil. Maybe turn the heat down a bit. Being small pieces they will cook in about half the expected time. The veg are cooked when you can draw a knife through with just a little effort. Do not overcook, the veg need to have a bite too them.

Okay, cooked and drained. Drain thoroughly, as any cooking water left in will make the mash too wet (it can become slop). I have put some large pats of butter on top of the veg ready for mashing. I put a lot of butter in, though it is a matter of taste.

Add the grated uncooked carrots.

After mashing a bit, I add salt, herbs, curry powder and any other flavour enhancers on hand. Chicken stock can be good to add (not liquid though).

About now I add milk powder ... say about two tablespoons worth. I also add peas and corn. These have been thrashed off in the microwave so they are cooked, and along with the milk powder are folded into the mix (folded is a flash way of saying mixed with a spoon).



Okay, now the chicken. It does not have to be chicken, I often do rustic mash with sausages, or hamburger patties.

I poach the chicken strips. This cooks them softly and does not make a mess. Also you can check strips easily to see if they are cooked. Do not overcook them. Wash the strips in cold water as soon as they are cooked (use a sieve). This cools them down and stops any more cooking. Then put them in the fridge in a container ready for use. They can be frozen (even if they were frozen before you poached them).

Fry the strips (only as many as you need, the rest stay in the container in the fridge). I use a dash of coconut oil in a nonstick pan. About half way through the browning process I add a dash or two of soy sauce. This gives them a good colour and a slight tang.

By now I will have put the rustic mash in a container in the fridge. I will only use what I need at each meal time. The balance can be used to make a rustic cottage pie and some other stuff (recipes coming up).

Here we are back at the beginning. This (below right) is the meal plated up. The mash has had a re-heat in the micro wave.

Good luck and keep an eye out for Sydney.

