CULINARY CORNER

Scranton School District
Educating Students From All Over The World

January 2026 Edition

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

This month, we're celebrating one of my favorite dishes growing up Shepherd's pie. Shepherd's Pie is a classic comfort food with humble origins, rooted in the British Isles. Traditionally made with minced meat and a mashed potato topping, it was born out of necessity—turning leftover meat into a hearty, satisfying dish and this recipe continues that honored tradition.

Shepherd's Pie

2 pounds russet potatoes

3 tablespoons kosher salt, divided

1/2 cup half-and-half

6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut in cubes

1 large egg yolk

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 cup chopped onion

1 1/2 cups peeled and finely diced carrot

1 1/2 pounds ground lamb

3/4 teaspoon curry powder

2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary

1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

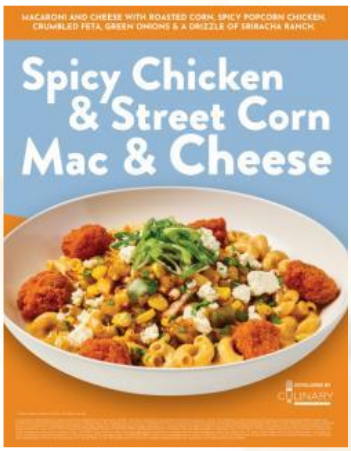
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 cup unsalted chicken stock
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 cup frozen English peas

- Heat oven to 400°F with a rack in the middle position.
- Peel the potatoes and cut in 1-inch chunks. Put in a 4-quart pot and add 1 tablespoon of the salt, and cover with cold water by 2 inches. Park over high heat, cover with a lid and bring to a boil, then uncover, lower the heat to maintain a simmer, and cook until tender, 8-10 minutes. Meanwhile, combine the half-and-half and butter in a microwave safe container and nuke until warmed through, about 35 seconds.
- Drain the potatoes and return them to the pot. Mash with a potato masher then add the warm half-and-half mixture and 1 teaspoon of the salt. Continue mashing until smooth then stir in the egg yolk. Set aside.
- Set a 12-inch cast iron skillet over medium-high heat and add the oil. When you see it shimmer (about 1.5 minutes), add the onion, carrots, and 1 teaspoon of the salt. Cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes, then stir in the garlic followed by the lamb, black pepper, curry powder, rosemary, thyme, and remaining salt. Stir, breaking up any clumps of meat with the back of a wooden spoon. Cook until the lamb is brown, about 5 minutes.
- Sprinkle the flour over the lamb mix, then stir and cook for another minute. Stir in the tomato paste, chicken stock, and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to a boil, then decrease the heat to low, cover with a lid, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is slightly thickened, about 10 minutes.
- Kill the heat and stir in the peas. Then, spoon the mashed potatoes over the top of the meat mixture and smooth with an offset or silicone spatula. Move to the oven and bake for 30 minutes, until the top is golden brown.

Originally, the term "cottage pie" referred to any meat pie topped with mashed potatoes

COMING SOON!!!



Spicy Chicken & Street Corn Mac & Cheese!

This special will be running from 1/12 to 1/16. Mac & Cheese with Roasted Corn Spicy, Popcorn Chicken Crumbled Feta, Green Onions, & a drizzle of Sriracha Ranch!

SHEPERDS PIE FUN FACTS

Country of Origin: United Kingdom (Ireland and Northern England)

Time Period: Late 1700s to early 1800s

Purpose: Created as a way to reuse leftover roast meat, especially lamb or mutton.

It's often enjoyed in colder months and remains a staple of British comfort food.

In modern times, the dish has traveled the globe, with many creative regional variations such as adding cheese, swapping in ground beef, or using sweet potatoes.

Originally, the term "cottage pie" referred to any meat pie topped with mashed potatoes. The term "shepherd's pie" became common in the mid-1800s and was typically used when lamb was the primary meat tying in with the idea of a shepherd and their flock.

Safety Corner!

Topic: Proper Food Handling

Did you know that an estimated 1 in 6 Americans will get sick from food poisoning this year alone? Food Poisoning not only sends 128,000 Americans to the hospital each year it can also cause long-term health problems. Please protect yourself and your guests with these simple handwashing steps.

1.) Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or long enough for you to sing happy birthday.
2.) Use hot water 110F and be sure rinse thoroughly including under your nails.
3.) Turn off the faucet with a paper towel so you don't dirty your hands.
4.) Use sanitizer and immediately glove up to prevent any other contamination issues.