Venison Shepherd's Pie with Whipped Potatoes

Chef's Note:

I recommend cooking the potatoes first and setting them aside. That way, once the meat mixture is ready, you can top it with the potatoes and go straight into the oven.

Ingredients – Meat Filling:

- 2 lbs ground venison
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups fresh corn kernels
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 cup diced carrot
- 2 ½ tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tsp sea salt
- 1 ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp rosemary (fresh or dried)
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 cups shredded smoked Gouda
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar

Instructions – Meat Filling:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. In a large sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium heat.
3. Add diced onions and sauté until tender.
4. Add corn and carrots; sauté for 1 minute, adjusting heat as needed to prevent burning.
5. Stir in garlic and cook until aromatic (about 30 seconds).
6. Add ground venison and mix with vegetables. Season with salt, pepper, and Worcestershire sauce.
    - If the mixture seems dry, add a little more oil or water to prevent sticking or burning.
7. Cook until venison is fully browned.
8. Add rosemary and parsley, reduce heat, cover, and let simmer for 5 minutes to blend flavors.
9. Stir in both cheeses and mix well until melted.
10. Drain excess grease from the mixture using a fine strainer, then return it to the pan.
11. Spread the meat mixture evenly in a baking dish.
12. Top with whipped potatoes (spoon or pipe them on).

13. Bake for 10–15 minutes, or until the top begins to brown.
14. Broil for 3–5 minutes at the end for a golden crust (optional).
15. Remove from oven, let cool for 5 minutes, and serve.

Whipped Potatoes:

Ingredients:

- 3 large russet potatoes, peeled and diced
- ½–1 cup heavy cream
- ½ stick unsalted butter (4 tbsp)
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions – Potatoes:

1. Fill a pot with cold water and add 1 tbsp salt. Set aside.
2. Peel and dice potatoes evenly.
3. Add diced potatoes to the pot and bring to a boil over high heat.
    - *Tip: Place a wooden spoon across the top of the pot to prevent boil-overs.*
4. Boil until potatoes are fork-tender.
5. Drain and return to the hot pot. Stir over low heat for 30–60 seconds to evaporate moisture.
6. Add 2 tbsp butter, ¼ cup cream, 1 tsp salt, and ¼ tsp pepper.
7. Whisk or mash until smooth and fluffy—like stiff whipped cream.
    - *Note: Add more butter/cream as needed for texture. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.*
8. Cover and set aside until ready to top your meat mixture.