**Venison Cottage Pie Topped with Cheesy Potato Mash**

Serves 4

**Ingredients**

1 tbsp olive oil

1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped

3 rashers smoky bacon, finely chopped

2 carrots, peeled and grated

520g wild minced venison

2 cloves garlic, crushed

2 tbsp tomato puree

250ml beef stock

100ml red wine

½ tsp dried thyme

½ tsp dried rosemary

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

**Cheesy potato mash**

800-900g potatoes peeled and cut into large dice

2-3 tbsp milk

50g butter

75g Cheddar cheese, grated

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

**Method**

1. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the onion and fry until lightly golden.
2. Add the bacon, fry for 3-4 minutes until lightly browned and add the grated carrot. Cook for a further 2 minutes.
3. Remove from the pan, add a little more oil and fry the minced venison until lightly browned.
4. Return the bacon and vegetables to the pan and add the garlic, tomato puree, beef stock, wine and herbs and seasoning.
5. Cover and cook over a medium heat for 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove the lid for the last 10 minutes to reduce the liquid if you wish.
6. Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas 4.
7. Put the potatoes in salted water, cover and cook for 10-15 minutes until soft. Drain well and return to the pan. Add the milk and butter, heat through and season. Mash until smooth.
8. Stir in ¾ of the grated cheese.
9. Put the cooked mince into an ovenproof dish and top with the mashed potato. Level the top and scatter with the remaining grated cheese.
10. Place in the oven for 20-25 minutes until the potato is golden brown and the mince bubbles up at the edges of the dish.

**Cook’s tip**

When wild venison is not available, farmed is a good alternative.

Use a floury potato like Maris Piper.