



Rating:



On-the-Spot Slumgullion

When challenged to make a meal in under 30 minutes using only what I could find in mother-in-law's larder and fridge, this is what I came up with...

5 Russet potatoes

sea salt

1 can (15 oz) green beans, drained

1 can (15 oz) sweet corn, drained

½ cup milk

1 can (10¾ oz) cream of mushroom soup

1 lb lean ground beef

freshly ground white pepper

1 tsp chili powder

1 tsp dried Italian herbs

milk, to make potatoes smooth

1 Tbsp garlic powder

4 Tbsp butter

¾ cup French-fried onions

chopped parsley, garnish

Scrub and chunk the potatoes, then put them in a pot of salted water to boil over medium-high heat. While that's working, open and drain the beans and corn. Put the milk and soup into a medium saucepan over low heat. Stir gently to smooth out the milk-soup mixture. Add the veggies, then cover and let the sauce come to a simmer. Brown and season the beef with salt, pepper, chili powder (not much!) and some of the Italian herbs. Set beef aside for later.

When the potatoes are fork-tender, drain (retain some of the cooking water), add butter and some milk, then mash to desired consistency. Use milk (and some of the cooking water if you desire) to make the potatoes as smooth as you wish; just don't make them too liquid. Season with white pepper, garlic powder and salt to taste.

Return to the sauce. Season with remaining chili powder, garlic powder and herbs. Adjust consistency with milk if sauce is too thick. Spoon in browned beef, leaving behind as much fat as possible. Stir sauce to blend, then remove from heat.

To serve: Using a large, rounded serving platter, spoon the potatoes onto the plate and shape to the contour of the platter, leaving a substantial bowl in the middle of the potatoes. Spoon the sauce into the center of the potatoes, then top with French-fried onions and parsley. Serve immediately with iced tea and a side salad to make a complete meal.

Yield: Six to eight servings (more if you can keep the horde from mooching seconds)

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

