

Slow Cooked Creamy Vegetable Stew with Cheesy Dumplings



Ingredients:

350ml boiling vegetable stock

50g butter, chopped

3 tbsp plain flour

2 onions, peeled and chopped

2 to 3 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed

250g washed sweet potato, cut into chunks

250g washed carrots, cut into chunks

250g washed swede, parsnip or turnip, cut not chunks

2 x 400g cans of lentils, chickpeas, butter beans or cannellini beans, NOT drained

Handful of chopped fresh herbs or 1 tbsp dried mixed herbs

200ml full fat soft cheese

1 tbsp made mustard; English, French or wholegrain

200g frozen peas or broad beans

Salt and pepper

For the Cheesy Dumplings:

100g self-raising flour

1 tsp baking powder

50g butter

100g strong Cheddar, grated

2 tsp dried mixed herbs

3 to 4 tbsp cold milk or water

Method:

1. Measure the boiling stock into a jug. Stir in the chopped butter and flour. Whisk until well mixed.
2. Add the chopped onion and garlic to the stock and leave to soak and soften for a few minutes.
3. Place the chopped vegetables and cans of lentils or beans with the juice into the slow cooker. Pour over the onion stock. Stir in the herbs and season with salt and pepper.
4. Turn the slow cooker on to the HIGH setting. Cover with the lid and cook for 2 hours.
5. To make the dumplings: place the flour and baking powder in a mixing bowl and rub in the butter until the mixture looks like fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the cheese and herbs and gradually add enough milk or water to bring the mixture together to form a soft dough.
6. Divide the dough into four equal portions, shape into balls and set the dumplings aside.
7. After the 2 hours of slow cooking, stir the soft cheese, mustard, frozen peas or beans into the stew. Carefully lay the dumplings on top so they just sit in the stew. Replace the lid.
8. Continue to cook on HIGH for a further 2 hours, until the dumplings have risen and cooked through.



Tips:

Use any seasonal vegetables for the stew.

Add skinless chicken thigh fillets instead of one of the vegetables.

Use Greek yoghurt or creme fraiche instead of cream cheese.

You can use any fresh herbs, such as parsley, thyme, coriander, or basil.

The dumplings can be made the day before and kept in the fridge until needed to add to the stew.

Leftovers can be frozen for up to 3 months. Thaw and reheat in the microwave for an instant home-made meal.

Alternatively, leave the dumplings out and serve this delicious creamy stew with piping hot mash.