



I first learned about Shepherd's Pie from Pat Shaffer when I was a teenager. I wasn't a fan of green peas at the time, but when she layered ground beef, green peas and mashed potatoes in a casserole, I was hooked. It is a really basic Irish dish, but over the years I have tweaked it to enhance the flavors and add more ingredients that I like (read: mushrooms).

Pat & Buss Shaffer were my second set of parents and as some of you know, they died when they got struck on their motorcycle on July 9, 2015. I learned so much about life and living from them, and appreciate all of the time that I got to spend with them over the last 35+ years. They touched the lives of so many, including my three girls. It won't be the same without Grandma Pat & Papa Buss here. But I assume God had work for them to do in heaven. It will be hard not to think about them every time I make Cranberry Salad, Shepherd's Pie, Pat's Pumpkin Pie or listen to her favorite song, "Knee Deep" by Zac Brown Band.

Shepherd's Pie

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 2 lbs. lean ground beef
- ½ Cup beef broth
- 2-3 lbs. potatoes
- 1 bag frozen green peas
- Worcestershire sauce
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- 8-12 z. Shredded cheddar cheese

Place the peeled and quartered potatoes in medium sized pot. Cover with at least an inch of cold water. Add a teaspoon of salt. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook until tender (about 20 minutes).

While the potatoes are cooking, place olive oil in a large sauté pan on medium heat. Add the chopped onions and cook until tender, about 6 to 10 minutes, adding sliced mushrooms after

the first 3-4 minutes. Pre-cook the frozen peas in the microwave with a little water (about 3-4 minutes).

Add ground beef to the pan with the onions and mushrooms. Cook until no longer pink. Season with salt and pepper. Add the Worcestershire sauce and beef broth. Bring the broth to a simmer and reduce heat to low. Cook uncovered for 10 minutes, adding more beef broth if necessary to keep the meat from drying out.

When the potatoes are done cooking (a fork can easily pierce), mash them in the pot with your favorite items for mashed potatoes (we like butter, salt, pepper, canned milk, or even mayonnaise/sour cream to make them creamy)

Preheat oven to 400° F. Spread the beef mixture, and peas in an even layer in a large baking dish (9x13 casserole). Spread the mashed potatoes over the top of the ground beef. Rough up the surface of the mashed potatoes with a fork so there are peaks that will get well browned. You can even use a fork to make creative designs in the mashed potatoes. Sprinkle with cheddar cheese on top.

Place in a 400° F oven and cook until browned and bubbling, about 30 minutes. If necessary, broil for the last few minutes to help the surface of the mashed potatoes brown.