

**Typ:** Fleisch

**Quelle:** Mary Berry: Cooks the Perfect, 122

\*\*\*\*

**Bemerkungen:** Roughly mashed carrots and potatoes make the perfect rustic topping for this wintry pie, as the taste and texture hold their own against the robust flavour of the venison.

**Zutaten** 900 g stewing venison, cut into bite-sized cubes  
600 mL red wine  
finely grated rind and juice of 1 orange  
finely grated rind of 1 lemon  
1 heaped tsp allspice berries, crushed (Piment)  
salt and freshly ground black pepper  
30 g plain flour  
2-3 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 piece smoked streaky bacon, about 200 g, cut into 1 cm cubes  
1 large onion, coarsely chopped  
250 g chestnut mushrooms, quartered  
2 bay leaves  
2 tbsp redcurrant jelly

#### FOR THE TOPPING

800 g carrots, cut into 1 cm thick slices  
800 g smooth potatoes, such as Desiree, peeled and quartered  
50 g butter (room temperature)

**Rezept:**

1. Put the venison into a large, non-metallic bowl. Pour in the wine and add the orange rind and juice, lemon rind, allspice, and black pepper. Stir well, submerging the meat. Cover with cling film and marinate in the fridge for a minimum of 12 hours, preferably up to 2 days. Remove the meat using a slotted spoon, drain, and pat dry with kitchen paper, then transfer it to another large bowl. (See Marinate and dry the meat.) Reserve the marinade.
2. Preheat the oven to 160°C (fan 140°C). Spread out the flour on a large plate or tray and season. Coat one-third of the meat in the flour. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large, non-stick frying pan until hot. Fry the floured meat over a medium-high heat until browned all over; this should take about 6 minutes. Remove the meat from the pan using a slotted spoon and transfer to a bowl or large plate. Set aside. Divide the remaining meat into 2 batches and repeat the flouring and browning, adding more oil if needed.
3. Tip the oil and juices from the frying pan into a flameproof casserole. Add the bacon to the casserole and fry over a medium heat until the fat begins to run, then add the onion and fry for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the bacon and onion are lightly coloured. Stir in the mushrooms and fry for a few minutes until the juices run.
4. Tip in the venison and its juices and pour over the reserved marinade. Stir, then add up to 150 mL cold water, just enough so the liquid barely covers the meat. Stir again, increase the heat, and bring to a simmer. Add the bay leaves, redcurrant jelly, and season with salt. Cover, transfer to the oven, and cook for 2 hours or until the venison is tender.
5. Meanwhile, make the topping: cook the carrots and potatoes together in a large pan of salted boiling water for 15-20 minutes or until tender. Drain in a colander, return to the pan with half the butter, and mash roughly with a potato masher. (See Make a stable mash topping.) Season.

6. Remove the casserole from the oven and increase the oven temperature to 200 °C (fan 180°C). Transfer just the meat and vegetables to the baking dish and spread them out in an even layer. Discard the bay leaves. Measure 200 mL of the gravy and pour this over the meat and vegetables. Spread over the mash and mark it in a criss-cross pattern with a fork. Grind over black pepper and dot with the remaining butter. (See Assemble the pie carefully.) Bake for 30-40 minutes until golden. Reheat the remaining gravy in a pan, pour it into a jug, and hand it round separately.

## KEYS TO PERFECTION

### MARINATE AND DRY THE MEAT

1. Stir the marinating venison every now and then, pressing the chunks of meat under the liquid with the back of a spoon. You can marinate the meat for as little as 12 hours, but 2 days is ideal (stirring about 3 times during this period). Keep the bowl covered between stirrings, to prevent evaporation.
2. After marinating, make sure the meat is as dry as possible before coating it in flour, otherwise it won't brown. Drain the pieces well when you lift them out of the liquid using a slotted spoon, then tip each spoonful onto a double sheet of kitchen paper and pat the meat thoroughly dry with more paper. Reserve the marinade.

### MAKE A STABLE MASH TOPPING

1. The mash should be quite stiff, so that it holds its own above the meat and gravy. Carrots are more watery than potatoes, so take care to drain them well with the potatoes. Shake the colander to get rid of as much water as possible, then return the vegetables to the pan and toss them over a low heat for a few minutes until they're quite dry.
2. Remove the pan from the heat and mash the carrots and potatoes with half the butter, simply breaking them up roughly with a potato masher, just enough to mix them together. When combining carrots in a mash like this, it's best not to over-mash and make the mixture too smooth or it will go sloppy.

### ASSEMBLE THE PIE CAREFULLY

1. For a perfect cottage pie, it's all about ratio and consistency —juicy meat and gravy at the bottom and a good, thick layer of mash on top. Transfer the meat and vegetables from the casserole to the dish using a slotted spoon, leaving behind as much of the gravy as possible. This is the way to control the amount of liquid that goes in the dish.
2. Now you should add just enough gravy to moisten the meat without making the pie too runny. If there's too much gravy, it will bubble up into the mash during baking and make it sloppy. Pour the measured gravy slowly over the venison, shaking the dish so that the liquid flows between the pieces of meat.
3. Spoon the mash on top of the meat mixture, then spread it out using a palette knife to make as even a layer as possible. Take care to go right to the edge of the dish, to seal in the gravy and prevent it from seeping up the sides. Finally, make criss-cross markings with a fork, grind over pepper liberally, and dot the top with knobs of butter.