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Need an idea for dinner? Check out this Winter warming comfort food recipe

If any of you read my post on NE1 Restaurant Week, you'll know my views towards January. Sometimes it feels like the month is never going to end, and when it's this cold and dark and dismal, you need some comfort food that won't break the bank and that'll keep you full and cosy for the evening ahead.

This was exactly my hopes for dinner this week, and while the whole 'Sausages and Mash' dish is hardly a new concept, I wanted to share my purse-friendly (but totally darn delicious!) take on the meal. The ingredients/quantities set out below will feed four comfortably, and will give a much-needed culinary cuddle to anyone it's put in front of.

And let's face it. Most diets are already out of the window. Dry January is a forgotten memory for 90% of us and to be perfectly frank, January is miserable enough without denying yourself of one of life's greatest joys. I mean, just look at it!

So, without further ado, the [Scran on the Tyne](#) take on traditional Bangers & Mash...

Shopping List

(Just FYI, I got everything from Aldi and the whole thing came in at around £2.75 per person. Not bad!)

Exquisite Argentinian Malbec - Aldi - £5.99 (for the gravy, with enough left over for a couple of large glasses of wine. Apologies to those doing Dry January!)

1 large onion

2 pork stock cubes, 2 vegetable stock cubes

Cornflour

600g Maris Piper potatoes

Sausages of your choice: we opted for Aldi's 'Specially Selected' Lincolnshire sausages, 6 for £1.39. (Obviously for 4 people you'll need two packs so you have a generous 3 each!)

Jar of Wholegrain Mustard (Aldi's is only 89p!)

50g salted butter

30ml milk - use your gut with this, you may need more, depending on your taste.

Salt and pepper

Method

For the gravy -

Chop your onions finely (but with a decent length!) and sweat in a frying pan. After around 3-4 minutes, add your stock cubes and a 175ml of the wine. Add a generous helping of pepper and keep this on a low heat while you get on with the rest.

I also added a bit of sage and some cornflour to thicken. Do this gradually and keep stirring. If you overdo it, add hot water. Just keep stirring throughout so it doesn't go lumpy!

For the mash -

Peel and cut your potatoes into quarters, then add to a pan of salted water to boil. Mine took around 15 minutes. Prod with a knife and when they're nice and soft, pass through a sieve then pop back in the pan ready to commence the mashing!

Add butter and start mashing, pausing to add a spot of salt and pepper throughout. I'm mad for both so I was pretty liberal. Then add your milk and take a spoon to start whipping your mash. I find this really makes it super smooth, and you can add as much milk as you need to keep it moist. Just don't go overboard, nobody likes soggy mash!

Once you're happy with the consistency, add three (yes, three!) tablespoons of Wholegrain Mustard and stir through. I have to admit, I added a couple more tablespoons as the little balls of mustard deliciousness are wonderful against the smooth mash. Plus, wholegrain mustard isn't as strong as most people will think, so your best bet is to try it throughout and add where you see fit. Just remember, you can add, but you can't take away!

(Don't forget, you should be stirring your gravy every so often throughout!)

Sausages -

Pop on a mid-heat under the grill and give each a couple of stabs to allow

the heat to pass through easily, and to avoid any explosions under the heat. I use tongs to turn throughout and avoid any burning.

Your sausages should take around 15-20 minutes under the grill. Just remember to turn, and if you're unsure, stab with a sharp knife to check the juices run clear.

I did crunchy broccoli with mine (because you need a bit of green on your plate, don't you!) and steamed this for about 7 minutes so it was nice and crunchy. Bearing in mind a full broccoli comes in at only 39p, you're getting one of your five a day for a very low cost.

And that, my dears, is pretty much it! Pile your plates high with delicious mashed potato, the veg of your choice and of course, those lovely sausages. The shining star of this dish is by far the gravy, bursting with flavour thanks to the red wine, sage and slow cooked onions. Be generous with this.

If you have a little more time on your hands, why not cut your onions into chunks and roast in the oven with some brown sugar sprinkled over? That's some lovely caramellised onion right there and it'll give another dimension to your gravy.

All that's left to do now is get cosy and enjoy!

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