Cheeseburger Pickle Tot Bake

One 9×13 in (23×33 cm) baking dish, at least 3.5 qt/3.3 L; 6 main-dish portions · Active 30 min · Total 1 hr 40 min

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon neutral oil (5 ml)
- 1 lb 5 oz lean ground beef (600 g)
- 1 large onion, finely chopped (180 g)
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour (8 g)
- 1 can crushed tomatoes with juice (14 oz/400 g)
- 1/3 cup low-sodium beef stock (80 ml)
- 2 tablespoons ketchup (30 g)
- 1 tablespoon prepared yellow mustard (15 g)
- 1 tablespoon dill-pickle brine (15 ml)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 oz cheddar, grated (115 g)
- 1 lb 10 oz frozen potato tots (750 g)
- 1/2 cup dill pickles, finely chopped and drained (80 g), for serving

Set out

Oven, 9×13 in (23×33 cm) baking dish, at least 3.5 qt/3.3 L, 12-in/30-cm deep skillet, Sieve, Small covered bowl, Rimmed baking sheet, Food thermometer, Suitable foil if the topping colors before the center finishes

Allergens

Milk, Wheat, Mustard; check ketchup, pickles and potato-tot labels. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Put the dish on a rimmed sheet. Drain chopped pickles and refrigerate in the covered bowl.

2. Heat oil in the skillet over medium-high heat. Cook beef and onion for 10–12 minutes, breaking up the meat, until onion is soft and beef reaches 160°F (71°C). Drain excess fat safely, leaving about 1 tablespoon in the pan.

3. Stir in flour for 1 minute. Add tomatoes, stock, ketchup, mustard, measured pickle brine and pepper. Simmer uncovered for 8–10 minutes, stirring, until thick enough that no watery ring forms around the meat.

4. Spread hot filling in the dish and scatter cheddar. Arrange frozen tots in one layer. Bake uncovered 35–45 minutes until tots are crisp and golden and the filling reaches 165°F (74°C) in the center and several other places. Shield a darkening area loosely with foil if the center needs longer.

5. Rest 5 minutes. Divide into six portions and add one-sixth of the cold chopped pickles to each plate immediately before eating.

An easy topping to keep separate

Put the chopped pickles in a clearly labeled chilled container if another person is serving the pan. That small separation is the difference between a hot casserole with a crisp accent and a soft mixed garnish.

A useful detail

The 100-minute total allows chopping, the complete skillet stage, up to 45 minutes baking and a short rest. The cold pickle topping is part of the measured recipe; other burger toppings are not included.

Keep it well

Keep pickles separate. Refrigerate leftover hotdish in shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C), at 40°F (4°C) or below and use within 3 days or an earlier ingredient deadline. Reheat to 165°F (74°C), then add freshly portioned cold pickles. Follow the pickle jar’s refrigerated opening instructions. Freeze promptly cooled bake portions without pickles for up to 2 months for quality; thaw in the refrigerator.