

# 10 Delicious Ways with Potatoes

There's no better accompaniment to bistro fare than potatoes, whether they're mashed, roasted, or layered into a crusty gratin. In this collection of *Fine Cooking's* favorite potato side dishes, the humble spud takes on a French accent in dishes that range from casual to dinner-party elegant.

## Oven Fries

Serves four.

This recipe is easily doubled; just use a second baking sheet so you don't crowd the fries.

**2 large russet potatoes (about 1¾ lb. total), peeled and cut lengthwise into ¼- to ½-inch-thick sticks**

**1 tsp. kosher salt**

**2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**

**Fleur de sel or other coarse salt**

**1 Rinse the potatoes:** Choose a pot large enough to hold the potatoes without crowding (4 to 5 quarts) and fill it with cold water. Drop the potato sticks into the water to rinse off the starch. You can immediately remove the potatoes from the water and proceed to the next step. Or if you want to prep the potato sticks in advance and roast them later in the day, you can leave them in the water. If you plan to wait more than 2 hours before roasting the fries, however, put the pot in the refrigerator.

**2 Parboil the potatoes:** Drain the potatoes, rinse well, and return them

to the pot with enough cold water to cover by 1½ inches. Add the kosher salt. Partially cover the pot, and bring the water to a boil over high heat. As soon as the water boils, reduce the heat to a calm boil and boil for 3 minutes. Gently drain the potatoes in a large colander and then spread them on paper towels to dry. (The potatoes can sit for up to an hour before roasting.)

**3 Roast the fries:** When you're ready to roast the fries, put a baking sheet on the middle oven rack and heat the oven to 450°F. Put the potatoes in a large bowl, add the olive oil, and toss to coat the potatoes, being careful not to break the sticks. Remove the hot baking sheet from the oven and arrange the potatoes on the sheet, leaving at least ½ inch between each. Roast, turning the fries over and rotating the baking sheet once after 15 minutes and then again every 6 to 8 minutes, until the fries are nicely browned and crisp, a total of about 30 minutes. Sprinkle with fleur de sel, toss gently, and serve immediately.

—Molly Stevens, *Fine Cooking* #71



Photos except where noted: Scott Phillips



## Potatoes Fondantes

Serves four to six.

A nonstick skillet is crucial so the potatoes don't stick to the pan as the liquid evaporates.

**2 lb. baby Yukon Gold or Red Bliss potatoes (20 to 25 potatoes, 1½ to 1¾ inches in diameter)**

**1 sprig fresh rosemary**

**2 cups homemade or low-salt chicken broth**

**2 Tbs. good-quality extra-virgin olive oil**

**1 Tbs. unsalted butter**

**1 tsp. kosher salt (less if the broth is salty)**

**1 to 2 Tbs. thinly sliced fresh chives**

**Fleur de sel or other sea salt for serving (optional)**

Trim the potatoes of any eyes or damaged areas and wash well in cold water. Arrange as many potatoes as will fit in one layer in a 10-inch nonstick skillet (there should be a little room to spare; save any extra potatoes for another use). Add the rosemary, broth, oil, butter, and salt. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium, cover the pan but leave the lid a tad ajar, and boil until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork, about 20 minutes. The liquid should still half-way surround the potatoes; if it doesn't, add more broth or water until it does.

Remove the pan from the heat and press on each potato with a ¼-cup measure just until it cracks open. Set the pan over medium-high heat and cook, uncovered, until all the liquid has evaporated and the potatoes have browned on one side, about 10 minutes. Gently turn the potatoes and brown the other side, another 4 to 5 minutes.

Remove the pan from the heat and let the potatoes rest for 5 minutes before transferring them to a serving platter. Sprinkle with the chives and serve immediately, passing the fleur de sel so diners can sprinkle some on if they want.

—Jacques Pépin, *Fine Cooking* #64



## Golden Russet Potato Gratin

Serves six to eight.

**1½ Tbs. olive oil**

**2 large yellow onions (about 1 lb. total), halved and thinly sliced from root to blossom end**

**Kosher salt**

**1½ cups low-salt chicken broth**

**3 Tbs. unsalted butter**

**3½ lb. russet potatoes (about 6 medium)**

**2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves**

**Freshly ground black pepper**

**1 cup lightly packed grated Gruyère (about 1½ oz.)**

**3 Tbs. freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano**

Heat the oven to 400°F. Heat a large skillet over medium heat, add the oil, and when it's hot, add the onions. Season well with salt and cook, stirring often, until the onions turn translucent and soften completely, about 10 minutes. Raise the heat to high and cook, stirring constantly, until the onions darken uniformly to a light brown, about 4 minutes. Carefully add the chicken broth (it will steam) and scrape the bottom of the pan to incorporate the browned bits into the broth. Remove from the heat.

Grease a 2½-quart casserole dish (about 8x11 inches) with 1 Tbs. of the butter. Cut the remaining butter into ¼-inch cubes. Peel the potatoes. Using a knife or a mandoline, cut the potatoes into disks ⅛ to ⅑ inch thick. Arrange a layer of potatoes, slightly overlapping, on the bottom of the casserole dish, starting at one end of the dish and working to the other end in rows. Cover evenly with a third of the onions (use a slotted spoon), a third of the thyme, ¼ tsp. salt, some pepper, and about 1½ tsp. of the butter. Arrange two more layers of potatoes, onions, thyme, salt, pepper, and butter over the first. Pour the broth over this third layer. For the fourth and last layer, use the remaining potatoes and butter and sprinkle on the Gruyère and Parmigiano.

Bake until the top layer is golden brown, the potatoes are tender when pierced, and most of the broth has been absorbed (use a knife to peek around the edges), about 50 minutes. Let the gratin cool for 20 minutes before cutting and serving.

—Michael Louchen, *Fine Cooking* #55



## Smooth & Silky Potato Purée

Serves four.

**2 lb. russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch cubes**

**2 Tbs. salt; more for seasoning**

**½ cup hot whole milk**

**Pinch freshly grated mace or nutmeg**

**Freshly ground white pepper to taste**

**7 oz. (14 Tbs.) unsalted butter, cut into pieces**

Put a large pot of water on high heat. Add the potatoes and salt and bring to a boil. Boil just until a skewer or knife can easily penetrate the center of the potatoes, 20 to 30 minutes. Drain the potatoes. Pass them through the fine disk of a food mill back into the pot in which they were cooked. Immediately add the milk, mace, salt, and pepper, stirring with a wooden spoon. Add the butter and stir vigorously until the butter is incorporated and the potatoes look almost glossy. Serve immediately.

—Josh Eisen, *Fine Cooking* #25

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### Potatoes Boulangère

Serves six as a side dish.

This dish is like a potato gratin but without the cheese and cream; the pancetta (Italian cured bacon) adds rich flavor. It would make a great side dish for roast chicken or beef.

- 1 Tbs. olive oil**
- 3½ oz. (½ cup) diced pancetta**
- 3 small onions, thinly sliced (2 cups)**
- 3 medium sprigs fresh thyme**
- 1 bay leaf**
- Scant 1 tsp. kosher salt**
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 lb. Yukon Gold or Yellow Finn potatoes, peeled and sliced into ¼-inch-thick half-moons**
- 1 cup homemade or low-salt chicken broth**

Heat the oven to 375°F. Heat the olive oil in a medium (9-inch) Dutch oven over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the pancetta. Sauté until it just begins to crisp and turn brown, about 4 minutes. Add the onions, thyme, bay leaf, salt, and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally and more frequently toward the end, until the onions are deep golden, about 14 minutes.

Meanwhile in a small saucepan, bring the chicken broth to a boil and then remove from the heat.

Add the potatoes to the onions and cook, stirring for a minute or two. Pour the hot broth over the potatoes and onions and bring the pot to a boil, stirring with a wooden spoon to scrape up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Cover the pot, put it in the oven, and bake for about 15 minutes. Uncover the pot, gently and evenly push the potatoes down with a spatula, and continue to bake uncovered until the potatoes are completely tender and have started to brown, about another 25 minutes. Discard the bay leaf and thyme before serving.

—Jean-Pierre Moullé, *Fine Cooking* #63

### Crisp Rösti Potatoes

Yields one 8-inch potato pancake; serves three to four as a side dish.

- 1 lb. potatoes (Yukon Golds or russets are best)**
- 1½ tsp. salt**
- Generous ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper**
- 3 Tbs. vegetable or olive oil for frying; more as needed**

Peel the potatoes and grate them, using the large holes of a hand grater or a food processor. Put the potatoes in a large bowl, add the salt and pepper, and toss to coat thoroughly. Let the potatoes rest for at least 5 minutes, and then, working with a fistful at a time, squeeze as much liquid as possible out of them and transfer to a second bowl. (The potatoes will start to discolor, but that won't really affect the final results.)

Heat a heavy-based skillet that measures about 8 inches across the base over medium-high heat. Add the oil (it should come to a depth of about ⅛ inch; add more if necessary.) When the oil begins to ripple and quiver slightly, test it by dropping in a potato shred—it should sizzle enthusiastically. If not, wait a few more seconds. When the temperature is right, take a fistful of potatoes, wring them out once more, and let them fall loosely from your fingers into the center of the pan. (Be careful because the oil will spatter.)

Working quickly, repeat until you have enough potatoes in the pan to cover the bottom. With a fork, gently spread out the shreds



of potato to make a layer about ½ inch thick, trying to distribute them evenly, avoiding dense or thin patches. If there are straggly potatoes around the edges, tuck them in with the fork so they don't burn.

Adjust the heat so that you hear a lively sizzle but the bottom isn't browning too rapidly. Cook until the underside is a deep golden brown and the potatoes on the top start to look translucent, 12 to 16 min. (Taste a few strands—they should be almost fully cooked and tender.)

Carefully slide the rösti out of the pan onto a dinner plate and return the pan to the heat. Put another plate on top of the rösti and, holding tightly, flip the plates over. Slide the inverted rösti back into the pan and continue cooking until the new bottom is browned and the potatoes feel really tender in the middle when poked with a knife (try to snitch a few strands from the center and taste them for doneness), another 6 to 8 minutes. Slide the rösti onto a cutting board if you're serving it immediately, or to a cooling rack to hold it for a few minutes. Blot the top with a paper towel to remove any excess oil. Cut into wedges and serve as soon as possible.

—Martha Holmberg, *Fine Cooking* #48



### French-Style Potato Salad

Serves four as a side dish.

Wine flavors are subtle but important in this salad, so use a wine you wouldn't mind drinking. I like to keep the potato skins on both for looks and nutrition.

- 2 lb. Yukon Gold potatoes, scrubbed but not peeled**
- 1½ cups dry white wine (or ½ cup white-wine vinegar)**
- Salt and freshly ground white pepper**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 Tbs. minced shallot**
- ⅔ cup chopped scallions**

Boil the whole unpeeled potatoes in generously salted water until fork-tender, 20 to 30 minutes, depending on size. As soon as you can handle the potatoes but while they're still warm, slice them just under ½ inch thick with a very sharp knife.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, boil the wine until it's reduced by half. (If using vinegar, don't cook it.) Sprinkle salt, pepper, and the hot reduced wine (or the vinegar) over the warm potatoes; toss gently. Add the olive oil, tossing just until combined, and then add the shallots and scallions. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Serve at room temperature.

—Jean-Louis Gerin, *Fine Cooking* #27



### Red Potato & Tomato Gratin with Leeks, Gruyère & Rosemary

Serves six to eight as a side dish; four as a main dish.

Try this gratin with Yukon Gold potatoes or substitute some of the red tomatoes with yellow, orange, or even green tomatoes.

#### FOR THE LEEKS:

**1½ Tbs. olive oil**  
**3 cups sliced leeks (about 3 large, white and pale green parts only), washed thoroughly**

#### FOR THE POTATOES:

**1¼ lb. red potatoes, unpeeled, cut into ¼-inch slices**  
**½ tsp. kosher salt; more for boiling the potatoes**  
**1½ Tbs. olive oil**  
**2 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary**

#### TO ASSEMBLE THE GRATIN:

**1 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary**  
**1¼ lb. ripe tomatoes, cored and cut into ¼-inch slices**  
**1¾ cups grated Gruyère**  
**½ tsp. kosher salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper to taste**  
**1½ Tbs. olive oil**  
**¾ cup fresh breadcrumbs mixed with 2 tsp. olive oil**

**Cook the leeks:** Heat the olive oil in a medium skillet (preferably nonstick) over medium heat. Add the leeks and sauté, stirring frequently, until limp and lightly browned, about 15 minutes. Spread the leeks evenly in the bottom of an oiled 2-qt. shallow gratin dish (preferably oval). Let cool.

**Cook the potatoes:** In a medium saucepan, cover the potato slices with well-salted water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a gentle boil and cook for 5 minutes or until the potatoes are just barely tender. Drain and rinse under cold water until cool. Pat dry. Toss the potatoes with the salt, olive oil, and rosemary.

**Assemble the gratin:** Heat the oven to 375°F. Sprinkle ½ tsp. of the chopped rosemary over the leeks. Starting at one end of the baking dish, lay a row of slightly overlapping tomato slices across the width of the dish. Prop the tomatoes against the dish at a 60-degree angle. Cover the row of

tomatoes with a generous sprinkling of Gruyère. Next, arrange a row of potato slices over the tomatoes. Sprinkle again with Gruyère. Repeat with alternating rows of tomatoes and potatoes, sprinkling each with cheese, until the gratin is full.

Sprinkle about ½ tsp. salt and the remaining ½ tsp. rosemary over all and season with pepper. Drizzle with the olive oil. Mix any remaining Gruyère with the breadcrumb mixture and spread this over the whole gratin. Cook until the gratin is well browned all over and the juices have bubbled for a while and reduced considerably, 60 to 65 minutes. Let cool for at least 15 minutes before serving.

—Susie Middleton, *Fine Cooking* #33



### Potatoes Mousseline

Serves six to eight.

**½ cup unsalted butter, melted**  
**3 lb. russet potatoes, peeled and cut into lengthwise quarters**  
**2 tsp. kosher salt; more to taste**  
**¾ cup whole milk**  
**1 cup heavy cream, whipped to soft peaks**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**

Brush a 9x13-inch baking dish with some of the melted butter. Put the potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with cold water by at least 1 inch. Add the salt, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Lower the heat to maintain a gentle boil, cover the pan partially, and cook until the potatoes are quite tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and return the potatoes to the pan. Over low heat, shake the pan until the potatoes are dry and no longer steam profusely, about 2 minutes.

Pass the potatoes through a ricer (or force through a coarse sieve with a rubber spatula) into a large bowl. Stir in the milk and half of the melted butter with a wooden spoon. Whisk the whipped cream a few times to fluff it up and then gently stir about one-third of it into the potato mixture to lighten it with the whisk. Using a rubber spatula, fold in the rest of the whipped cream. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer the potatoes to the baking dish. Spread evenly, drizzle with the remaining butter, and refrigerate.

To reheat the mousseline, bring the potatoes to room temperature. When the beef is resting, put the potatoes in the 250°F oven for 30 minutes to rewarm. Just before serving, heat the broiler to high and broil the potatoes until lightly browned, 2 to 4 minutes.

—Barbara Lynch, *Fine Cooking* #62



### Mustard & Rosemary Roasted Potatoes

Serves four to six.

These potatoes start out looking very wet, but the mixture cooks down to leave the potatoes crisp, crusty, and tangy.

**½ cup plus 1 Tbs. Dijon mustard**  
**¼ cup olive oil**  
**1 Tbs. dry vermouth or other dry white wine**  
**2 cloves garlic, minced**  
**1 Tbs. chopped fresh rosemary**  
**1 tsp. kosher salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**  
**2 lb. red-skinned potatoes, cut into ¾- to 1-inch dice**

Heat the oven to 400°F. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the mustard, olive oil, vermouth, garlic, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Add the potatoes and toss to coat. Dump the potatoes onto a large rimmed baking sheet and spread them in a single layer. Roast, tossing with a spatula a few times, until the potatoes are crusty on the outside and tender throughout, 50 to 55 min. Serve hot.

—Molly Stevens, *Fine Cooking* #42