



Creamy Christmas Potato Bake

Why We Mash

This dish is about comfort. It is a warm hug on a plate. I think mashed potatoes are the best part of any meal. So why not make them the whole meal? That was my thought one snowy December.

I had too many potatoes. My grandson was coming. I wanted to make something special. I mixed in all the good things from the fridge. Cheese, butter, a little cream. The result was pure joy. I still laugh at how fast it disappeared.

The Heart of the Dish

Let's talk about the potatoes. Yukon Golds are the best for mashing. They are creamy and buttery all by themselves. They make everything

smoother. This matters because the potato is the star. You want it to taste wonderful.

Boil them with a good bit of salt. This seasons them from the inside. It makes a big difference. When you drain them, put them back in the warm pot. Mash them right away. Doesn't that smell amazing? The steam carries that potato smell all through the kitchen.

The Stir-In Hug

Now for the fun part. Add the butter first. Let it melt into the hot potatoes. Then pour in the half-and-half. It will make everything silky. Next, the two cheeses. Gruyère is nutty. Mozzarella is stretchy. Together, they are magic.

Finally, the chives. They give a little fresh, green bite. This matters because food needs balance. All that richness needs a bright spot. The chives are that spot. *Fun fact: chives are the smallest member of the onion family!*

The Crunchy Crown

Do you like crunchy toppings? I do. The topping here is simple. Panko bread crumbs, more cheese, and melted butter. Mix it with your fingers. It feels good. Then sprinkle it over the creamy potatoes.

In the oven, the top gets golden and crisp. The bottom stays soft and warm. That contrast is everything. It makes each bite interesting. What is your favorite part of a casserole? The creamy inside or the crunchy top?

Make It Your Own

This is a very forgiving recipe. You can make it ahead. Just mix it, put it in the dish, and keep it cold. Bake it when you need it. Perfect for a busy holiday.

You can also change it. Try a different cheese. Add some cooked bacon. Use green onions instead of chives. Cooking is about what you like. What is one ingredient you would love to stir into these potatoes?

Gathering Around the Table

Let the bake rest for 30 minutes after the oven. This is important. It lets everything settle. It will be creamy, not runny. It is hard to wait. I know. But it is worth it.

See also [Salted Caramel Fudge Truffle Noel](#)

This dish brings people together. It is made for sharing from one big dish. That is its real purpose. Not just to feed us, but to gather us. Does your family have a special dish that means “celebration” to you? I would love to hear about it.

Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Yukon Gold potatoes	4 pounds	Peeled and sliced ½ inch thick
Table salt	1 teaspoon, plus salt for cooking	

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Unsalted butter	16 tablespoons (2 sticks)	Cut into 16 pieces
Half-and-half	1 ½ cups	
Pepper	1 teaspoon	
Gruyère cheese	6 ounces (1½ cups), shredded	For potato mixture
Whole-milk mozzarella cheese	6 ounces (1½ cups), shredded	
Fresh chives	½ cup	Minced
Panko bread crumbs	¾ cup	For topping
Gruyère cheese	2 ounces (½ cup), shredded	For topping
Unsalted butter	2 tablespoons	Melted, for topping



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Instructions

Step 1: First, move your oven rack up a bit. Heat your oven to 400 degrees. Now, peel all those lovely Yukon Gold potatoes. Slice them into nice, thick half-inch pieces. Put them in your big pot and cover them with cold water. Add a good handful of salt to the water. This is the secret to tasty potatoes!

Step 2: Bring the pot to a boil over high heat. Then, turn it down to a happy simmer. Let the potatoes cook until they are perfectly tender. You should be able to poke them easily with a knife. This takes about 20 minutes. Doesn't that smell amazing already?

Step 3: Drain all the water from the pot. Put your beautiful potatoes right back in. Add all that lovely butter. Now, mash them until they are smooth and dreamy. (A potato masher works better than a fork here, trust me!). No lumps allowed!

Step 4: Pour in the half-and-half. Add the pepper and your teaspoon of salt. Stir everything until it's all friends. The mixture will become so creamy. I still laugh at how my grandson would sneak a taste right here.

Step 5: Time for the best part: the cheese! Stir in all the Gruyère and mozzarella. Don't forget the fresh chives for a little green. Mix until every bite will be cheesy. **What's your favorite cheese to melt into potatoes? Share below!**

Step 6: Scoop this fluffy cloud into your baking dish. Smooth the top gently with a spatula. Now it's ready for its crunchy hat. You can even stop here and pop it in the fridge for later.

Step 7: Make the topping. Mix the panko, more Gruyère, and melted butter in a bowl. It will look like sandy gold. Sprinkle this evenly over your potato mountain. Be generous!

See also Cranberry Gelée Holiday Glaze

Step 8: Bake your casserole for about 30 minutes. You want the top crisp and golden. The smell will fill your whole house. Let it sit for 30 minutes before serving. This wait is the hardest part, but it helps it set.

Creative Twists

This recipe is like a warm hug. But sometimes, a hug needs a little change! Here are some fun ideas. Try adding a cup of cooked, chopped ham for a full meal. Use sharp cheddar instead of Gruyère for a more familiar taste. Or, mix in a handful of chopped, crispy bacon before baking. Which one would you try first? Comment below!

Serving & Pairing Ideas

This potato bake is the star of the table. I love it with simple roasted green beans. A bright, citrusy salad cuts through the richness nicely. For a festive touch, sprinkle extra chives on top. To drink, a crisp apple cider is perfect for everyone. For the grown-ups, a glass of chilled Chardonnay pairs beautifully. Which would you choose tonight?



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Keeping Your Potato Bake Cozy

This casserole stores beautifully. Let it cool completely first. Then cover it tightly and put it in the fridge. It will be happy there for three days. You can also freeze it for a month. Just wrap it well in foil.

To reheat, let a frozen dish thaw in the fridge overnight. Cover it with foil and bake until warm. Then remove the foil to crisp the top. I once served it straight from the freezer. The middle was still an ice block! Patience is a kitchen virtue.

Making a big batch matters. It gives you a delicious head start on a busy week. A ready-made dish is a hug for your future self. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

Simple Fixes for Common Hiccups

Sometimes the potatoes turn out gluey. Do not over-mash them! A potato masher is best. A food processor makes them gummy. I remember when I learned this the hard way. We had sticky potatoes for dinner.

If your topping burns, the oven rack is too high. Place it in the upper-middle position. Also, check the casserole after 20 minutes. Your topping should be golden, not black. Another issue is a dry bake. Your potatoes may have been undercooked. Make sure they are very tender before mashing.

Fixing these small things builds your cooking confidence. It also makes sure every bite is full of flavor. Good food is about joy, not stress.

Which of these problems have you run into before?

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Can I make this gluten-free? A: Yes! Use gluten-free panko bread crumbs for the topping. It works just as well.

See also Creamy Christmas Potato Clouds

Q: How far ahead can I prepare it? A: You can assemble it three days ahead. Keep it covered in the fridge until baking.

Q: What cheese can I swap? A: Try sharp cheddar instead of Gruyère. Use what you love and have on hand.

Q: Can I make a smaller batch? A: Absolutely. Just cut all the ingredients in half. Use an 8-inch square baking dish.

Q: Any optional tips? A: A *fun fact*: Yukon Gold potatoes are naturally buttery and creamy. They make the best mash! For extra flavor, add a pinch of garlic powder. **Which tip will you try first?**

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope this recipe brings warmth to your table. Food is best when shared with loved ones. It is a simple way to show you care. I would love to hear about your cooking adventure.

Tell me all about it in the comments. **Have you tried this recipe?** Your stories are my favorite thing to read. Now, go make something delicious.

Happy cooking! —Elowen Thorn.



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[Print Recipe](#)

Creamy Christmas Potato Bake

Author: Elowen Thorn



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Cooking Method: [Baking](#)

Cuisine: [American](#)



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Courses: [Side Dish](#)

Difficulty: **Beginner**



Creamy Christmas Potato Bake | 19

Prep time: **30 minutes**



Creamy Christmas Potato Bake | 20

Cook time: **30 minutes**

Rest time: **30 minutes**



Creamy Christmas Potato Bake | 22

Total time: **1 hour 30 minutes**



Creamy Christmas Potato Bake | 23

Servings: **10 servings**



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Calories: **520 kcal**

Best Season: **Summer**

Description

A rich and decadent cheesy mashed potato casserole, perfect for

holiday gatherings.

Ingredients

- ☐ 4 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes
- ☐ 1 teaspoon table salt, plus salt for cooking potatoes
- ☐ 16 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 16 pieces
- ☐ 1 ½ cups half-and-half
- ☐ 1 teaspoon pepper
- ☐ 6 ounces Gruyère cheese, shredded (1½ cups)
- ☐ 6 ounces whole-milk mozzarella cheese, shredded (1½ cups)
- ☐ ½ cup minced fresh chives

¾ cup panko bread crumbs

2 ounces Gruyère cheese, shredded (½ cup)

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

Instructions

1. Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Peel potatoes. Slice potatoes ½ inch thick. Place potatoes and 2 tablespoons table salt in Dutch oven, add water to cover by 1 inch.
2. Bring to boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium and simmer until potatoes are tender and can be easily pierced with paring knife, 18 to 20 minutes.
3. Drain potatoes and return them to pot. Add butter and mash with

potato masher until smooth and no lumps remain.

4. Stir in half-and-half, pepper, and 1 teaspoon table salt until fully combined.
5. Stir in Gruyère cheese, mozzarella cheese, and minced fresh chives until incorporated.
6. Transfer potato mixture to 13 by 9-inch baking dish and smooth top with spatula.
7. Combine panko bread crumbs, Gruyère cheese, and melted butter in bowl. Sprinkle topping evenly over potato mixture.
8. Bake until casserole is heated through and topping is crisp and golden brown, about 30 minutes. Let cool for 30 minutes. Serve.

Notes

TO MAKE AHEAD: At end of step 6, let potato mixture cool completely in dish, cover tightly with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for up to 3 days. When ready to bake, remove plastic, cover dish tightly with aluminum foil, and bake for 25 minutes. Remove foil and proceed with step 7.

Keywords: Potato, Casserole, Cheesy, Holiday, Christmas, Side Dish