



# Crispy Christmas Potato Crush

## The Humble Potato's Big Night

Some foods try too hard. Not the potato. It is quiet and good. On Christmas, it deserves a spotlight. This recipe lets it shine. We are not making smooth mash. We are making a glorious, chunky crush.

It has crispy bits and soft centers. The skin stays on for texture. I think food is best when it feels real. This dish feels real and joyful. What is your favorite potato dish? Is it mashed, fried, or baked?

## A Little Story About Bay Leaves

We simmer the potatoes with a bay leaf. This is my secret. It adds a warm, woodsy whisper. My own grandma did this. She said it was like a hug for the potatoes. I still laugh at that.

But it matters. Little touches build flavor. They make food taste cared for. *Fun fact: A bay leaf comes from the laurel tree. Ancient Romans made crowns from its branches!* We get to cook with history.

## The Magic of Smashing, Not Mashing

After boiling, let the potatoes dry a bit. This is key. Dry skins get crispy later. Then, we smash. Use the back of a spoon. Just break them open, don't make them smooth.

We want chunks and texture. Life is more fun with texture, don't you think? Then, the creamy sauce goes in. Warm butter and soft cream cheese. Doesn't that smell amazing? It makes everything rich and cozy.

## Why We Save the Potato Water

Never pour that cooking water down the drain! Save a half cup. The starchy water is liquid gold. It helps the sauce cling to the potatoes. It makes everything silky.

Add it a spoonful at a time. The potatoes will soak it up. This matters because it connects everything. The flavor from the bay leaf and salt is in that water. We keep it in the family. Do you have a kitchen tip like this, passed down to you?

## Making It Your Own

I add chives for a little green onion kiss. But you could skip them. You could add a pinch of garlic powder. Or some crispy bacon bits on top. Make it yours.

Cooking is not just following steps. It is about adding your own heart.

That is the second big lesson. Food made with a happy heart tastes better. It just does. Will you try the chives, or think of another add-in?

See also Creamy Banana Christmas Pie

## Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Red Bliss potatoes (about 2 inches in diameter)	2 pounds	Unpeeled and scrubbed
Table salt	1 teaspoon + 1/2 teaspoon (or to taste)	For cooking water and seasoning
Bay leaf	1	
Unsalted butter	4 tablespoons	Melted and warm
Cream cheese	1/2 cup (4 ounces)	At room temperature
Ground black pepper	1/2 teaspoon (or to taste)	
Fresh chives, chopped	3 tablespoons	Optional



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### Instructions

**Step 1:** Put your clean potatoes in a big pot. Cover them with cold water and add a pinch of salt and the bay leaf. Let them boil, then simmer until they are very tender. A knife should slide in easily. Keep half a cup of that starchy water before you drain them. (Saving that water is my secret for creamy potatoes!)

**Step 2:** Let the potatoes steam dry in the warm pot for five minutes. This helps them get fluffy. Meanwhile, mix the melted butter and soft cream cheese in a bowl. Whisk until it's all smooth and dreamy. Doesn't that smell amazing already?

**Step 3:** Pour that creamy mix over the dried potatoes. Add some of your saved potato water, pepper, salt, and chives. Now, gently smash them just to break the skins. I use my old wooden spoon for this. Fold everything together until it looks rustic and delicious. **Do you think the potato water makes it creamier or fluffier? Share below!**

**Step 4:** Keep adding splashes of potato water until it's a bit looser than you want. It will thicken up as it sits. Give it a taste right from the spoon. Does it need another sprinkle of pepper? Adjust and serve it right away, all warm and welcoming.

### Creative Twists

**Garlic & Herb:** Stir in a clove of minced roasted garlic with the butter.

**Everything Bagel:** Swap chives for everything bagel seasoning on top.

**Cheesy Crust:** Bake the finished crush in a dish with cheddar on top

until golden.

**Which one would you try first? Comment below!**

## Serving & Pairing Ideas

This potato crush loves company. I serve it right from the pot at the table. It's wonderful with a simple roast chicken or a glazed ham. For color, add some steamed green beans on the side. A fizzy apple cider is my favorite non-alcoholic match. For the grown-ups, a chilled glass of Chardonnay pairs beautifully. It cuts right through the richness. This dish makes any dinner feel like a special occasion. I still smile seeing everyone scoop a second helping. **Which would you choose tonight?**

See also Crimson Berry Noel Bites



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## Keeping Your Potato Crush Cozy

These potatoes are best fresh and hot. But leftovers can be lovely. Let them cool completely first. Then pop them in a sealed container in the fridge. They will keep for three days. I once tried freezing them, bless my heart. The texture turned a bit grainy when thawed. So I don't recommend the freezer for this one.

To reheat, add a splash of milk or broth to a pan. Warm the potatoes over medium-low heat. Stir them gently until hot. You can also use the microwave. Just cover them and use a low power setting. Batch cooking saves so much time during the busy holidays. It lets you enjoy your guests more. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

## Simple Fixes for Common Hiccups

Sometimes potatoes can be tricky. Here are easy fixes. First, if your potatoes are watery, you boiled them too fast. A gentle simmer keeps them from soaking up water. I remember when my first batch was soggy. I learned to watch the heat closely.

Second, if your mix seems dry, add more cooking water. Add it one spoonful at a time. This keeps the potatoes fluffy and moist. Third, if the cream cheese won't blend, it was too cold. Let it sit on the counter first. Room temperature ingredients blend smoothly. Getting the texture right matters. It makes the dish feel special and comforting. Fixing small problems builds your cooking confidence. **Which of these problems have you run into before?**

## Your Quick Questions, Answered

**Q: Is this recipe gluten-free?** A: Yes, all the ingredients are naturally gluten-free. Just check your labels to be safe.

**Q: Can I make it ahead?** A: You can boil the potatoes a few hours early. Then finish the smash and mix just before serving.

**Q: What can I use instead of cream cheese?** A: Full-fat sour cream works beautifully. It gives a similar tang and creaminess.

**Q: Can I double the recipe?** A: Absolutely! Use a bigger pot. You may need to boil the potatoes a little longer.

**Q: Are the chives important?** A: They add a nice fresh color and bite. But the dish is still wonderful without them. **Which tip will you try first?**

See also Winter Spiced Blackberry Swirl Buns

## From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope you love making this cozy dish. It always reminds me of my crowded holiday table. The sound of laughter and clinking plates is the best seasoning. *Fun fact: Red Bliss potatoes have thin, pretty skins. That's why we leave them on for this recipe!*

I would love to hear about your cooking adventure. Did your family ask for seconds? **Have you tried this recipe?** Please tell me all about it in the comments below. Sharing stories is my favorite part.

Happy cooking! —Elowen Thorn.



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Author: Elowen Thorn

Cooking Method:[Stovetop](#)

Cuisine:[American](#)

Courses:[Side](#)

Difficulty: **Beginner**

Prep time: **10 minutes**

Cook time: **45 minutes**

Rest time:

Total time: **55 minutes**

Servings: **4 servings**

Calories: **320 kcal**

Best Season: **Summer**

## **Description**

A rustic and comforting side dish featuring creamy, smashed Red Bliss

potatoes with a rich butter and cream cheese mixture, finished with fresh chives.

## Ingredients

- 2 pounds Red Bliss potatoes (about 2 inches in diameter), unpeeled and scrubbed
- Table salt
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and warm
- 1/2 cup cream cheese (4 ounces), at room temperature
- Ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives (optional)

## Instructions

1. Place potatoes in large saucepan and cover with 1 inch cold water; add 1 teaspoon salt and bay leaf. Bring to boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer gently until paring knife can be inserted into potatoes with no resistance, 35 to 45 minutes. Reserve 1/2 cup cooking water, then drain potatoes. Return potatoes to pot, discard bay, and allow potatoes to stand in pot, uncovered, until surfaces are dry, about 5 minutes.
2. While potatoes dry, whisk melted butter and softened cream cheese in medium bowl until smooth and fully incorporated. Add 1/4 cup of reserved cooking water, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, chives (if using), and 1/2 teaspoon salt.
3. Using rubber spatula or back of wooden spoon, smash potatoes just enough to break skins. Fold in butter/cream cheese mixture until most of liquid has been absorbed and chunks of potatoes remain. Add more cooking water 1 tablespoon at a time as needed, until

potatoes are slightly looser than desired (potatoes will thicken slightly with standing). Adjust seasonings with salt and pepper; serve immediately.

## Notes

For a richer flavor, use full-fat cream cheese. The potatoes can be cooked ahead of time and kept warm, but smash and mix with the cream cheese mixture just before serving for the best texture.

Keywords: Potatoes, Christmas, Side Dish, Cream Cheese, Chives