



Chapter Four

POMME PURÉE



Gordon Ramsay Teaches Cooking II: Restaurant Recipes at Home

“

The secret behind any great mash is in the waxy potato, because they hold the most amazing amount of cream and butter.

Chapter Review

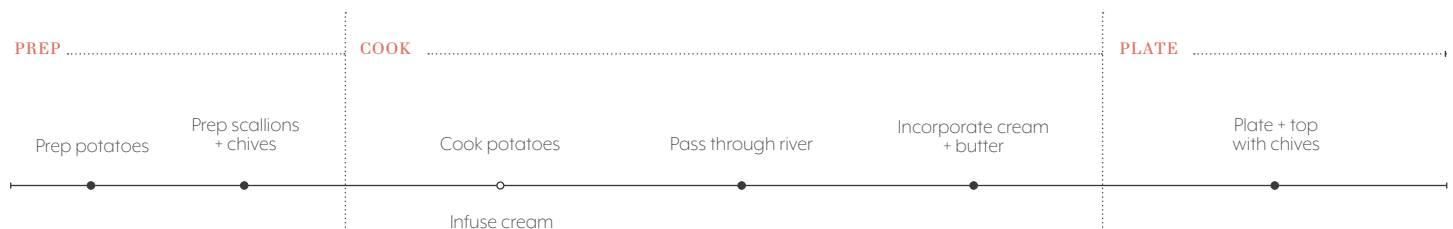
When Gordon learned to perfect pomme purée in Paris, the mix was about 60 percent potato and 40 percent butter and cream. If you use dense, waxy potatoes and cook them following Gordon’s modernized method, you can up the potato flavor and only use about 10 percent fat. Waxy potatoes are high in moisture, low in starch, and maintain a dense texture well when cooked. Starchy potatoes are low in moisture, high in starch, and have a floury texture when cooked. Red, white, and yellow potatoes are waxy, while brown potatoes tend to be starchy.

Yukon Gold potatoes (yellow) are the best varietal for pomme purée—and they’re easy to find. Dice the potatoes for even cooking. Start the seasoned, diced Yukon Golds in cold water, bring to a rapid boil, then turn down to simmer for a gentle cook. If the potatoes are cooked at a rapid boil the outsides finish before the centers resulting in either a watery potato or raw centers. Draining and steaming to finish helps pull out any remaining water for a fluffy final texture. Make sure to season the potatoes at each step of the process—while they’re simmering, when you purée them, and to finish.

Gordon thinks of the seasoned, infused cream as the “varnish” of this dish—it adds a silkiness and shine to the final purée. Gordon likes to use young garlic with small cloves, as it is less harsh than mature garlic and won’t overpower the flavor of the potatoes. Just crack the garlic cloves to allow them to release their flavor into the cream.

Chives are a delicate herb both in flavor and texture. Gordon explains that if you’re mincing chives correctly, there should never be any green left behind on the cutting board. Use a sharp knife, let it do the work, and you’ll make nice, clean slices without smashing the delicate green stems. Their delicate oniony flavor will play up the flavors in the infused cream and add a pop of color to the presentation.

RECIPE TIMELINE



POMME PURÉE

*Prep*

- Potatoes can be peeled and diced up to five days ahead of use. Make sure to rinse the diced potatoes in cold water, cover in cold water, and store in the refrigerator in an airtight container. Check the water as the days go by. If it turns brown and starch settles to the bottom, drain the potatoes, rinse, and replace the water.
- You can make the pomme purée up to a few hours ahead of time and store in a warm place in a saucepot wrapped in plastic and then cover with a lid. When you're ready to serve, heat the purée low and fold in more heavy cream to loosen it up if needed.

Ingredient Notes

- Double cream is common in the UK but hard to find elsewhere. Substitute with whipping cream (or heavy whipping cream in the US). Double cream has a slightly higher fat content but whipping cream can be used as an equal substitute.
- The excess duck fat can be cooled and refrigerated for later use cooking vegetables or potatoes, or to confit.
- Gordon likes to serve this version of pomme purée with fish dishes; whereas he often makes a basil-infused version to serve with steak. Try infusing the cream with different herbs such as basil, parsley, or rosemary to pair with different proteins. Take notes in your tasting notebook about your favorite combinations.

Dietary Restrictions

- This dish is gluten-free and vegetarian. Vegan versions of cream, milk, and butter can be substituted but will give the end result a different flavor profile.

Pomme Purée

Serves 8 to 12

Infused Cream

1½ cups heavy cream
1 teaspoon nutmeg
2 bay leaves
12 garlic cloves, crushed
Salt and black pepper to taste

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, add the heavy cream, bay leaf, oil, and garlic. Bring to a boil and reduce the cream by one fourth. This should take 3 to 5 minutes. Season lightly with salt to taste. Strain the cream through a sieve into a small saucepot to keep warm. Smash the garlic into the sieve to expel as much flavor as possible.

Potatoes

3 large or 6 small waxy potatoes
(Yukon or Kennebec), peeled and diced
1 tablespoon salt, plus more to taste
¼ cup unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
¼ cup scallions, thinly sliced

Pour the diced potatoes into a medium saucepot. Add 3 quarts cold water or enough to completely submerge the potatoes. Add 1 tablespoon of salt. Cover and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Taste the water to check the salt level. If it isn't seasoned enough, add more salt little by little until reaching your desired seasoning. Turn heat down to medium-low and bring to simmer. Cook 7 to 8 minutes, or until a diced potato can easily be smashed on a cutting board by the back of a spoon. Be sure not to let the water come back to a boil or you will end up with watery, mushy potatoes.

Pour the cooked potatoes into a strainer and allow to drain for 30 seconds to fully release excess water, then add back into the saucepot. Cover and bring to medium heat to let the potatoes steam for 1 to 2 minutes. Scoop cooked potatoes into a ricer and press over a medium-sized bowl. Repeat until all the potatoes have passed through the ricer. Slowly fold a third of the infused cream into the riced potatoes with a rubber spatula. Lightly whip the potatoes and add another third of the infused cream. Fold in a few knobs of cubed butter at a time until all of the butter is incorporated. Whip the potato mixture and taste for seasoning. Add more salt and/or infused cream if needed. Finally, fold in the sliced scallions. This purée should be aerated, light, fluffy, and able to run off the side of a spoon or rubber spatula.

Pomme Purée

Serves 8 to 12

Plate + Garnish

½ bunch chives, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

Spoon the purée into two 16-ounce serving bowls or use as a component in a plated dish. Sprinkle a generous amount of chives over the top of the potatoes and finish with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.