

## Mashed Potatoes for Eight Hardy Souls

Don't follow directions exactly because they are made up . . .

1. Get a half of cube of real butter and set it aside – let it soften
2. Peel and cube four spuds
3. Place spuds in a pot of lightly salted water and crank up the heat
4. As spuds boil, mince four garlic cloves and sauté in butter; cook four strips of bacon, chop some chives, and grate some Gruyere cheese.
5. About this time, turn the oven on low and pre-heat a “dutch oven” kind of a pot.
6. Once spuds are soft, drain the water (stating the obvious here)
7. Add butter, garlic, heavy whipping cream (or anything that builds coronary plaque), and seasoning (Czechoslovakian heritage favors only salt and pepper; however, if some herbes de provence sneaks in it is not a fatal cooking error)
8. Beat or mash to preference; don't be afraid to add more butter or cream (simply turn your head and act unaware that another slab of butter had found its way into the mix). Oh yea, one more thing, if some bacon grease finds its way into the mix that is just fine . . . do not despair.
9. When you like how it looks and tastes, pull the dutch oven from the real oven and treat it with butter (yes, more butter) then scoop the mashed potatoes into the dutch oven.
10. Garnish the top with bacon bits, chives, and grated cheese (of course you can mix the items into the spuds when mixing – the benefit of garnishing the top is it makes the dish a bit more user friendly. Although hard to believe, some souls avoid bacon, so if it's on the top they can do a work around and still enjoy the essences of the spuds.).
11. Broil before serving – strive for a nice brown crust.
12. Finally, if your guests want to talk about what's in the spuds (they don't really want to know) simple divert the conversation to history. It appears that the first recipe for mashed potatoes is found in *The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy* first published in 1747.