

Potato Salad

8 Ways

Potatoes are indigenous to Central and South America and have been cultivated there for more than 4,000 years, mainly in mountainous regions. They have been found growing at altitudes as high as 15,000 feet. British explorers took the lowly tuber to England and Ireland in the early 1600s; astoundingly enough, it didn't make its way to North America until Irish Protestants brought it to New Hampshire in 1719. The potato didn't penetrate continental Europe until the late 1700s, but by the 1800s, most European cuisines had distinctive potato dishes, most of which made their way to the melting pot of America. Germany is credited with the first potato salad, seasoned with vinegar and oil.

Today, we can divide most potato salads loosely into two categories — those with vinaigrette-based dressings and those with a creamy mayonnaise-based dressing. Beyond that, all bets are off.

Choose a mealy potato such as russet if you want a salad with softer texture; waxy potatoes have a lower water content and will stay firmer. Whichever you choose, cook them (whole and unpeeled if they're small to medium potatoes) by covering them with cooking liquid, bringing to a boil, and cooking until a knife can be inserted easily into the potato, with a little resistance at the center. Take care not to overcook — unless, of course, you want a very soft salad! The possibilities are endless. ♦

Classic Creamy Potato Salad
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Shrimp and Potato Salad

- 2** pounds russet potatoes
- chicken broth, for boiling potatoes**
- salt and pepper**
- ½** cup dry white wine
- ⅓** cup olive oil
- 4** teaspoons red wine or cane vinegar
- ½** pound cleaned Louisiana shrimp, cooked
- 1** tablespoon chopped parsley
- 1** tablespoon chopped basil
- ½** cup mayonnaise
- ¼** cup sour cream
- 2** tablespoons lemon juice
- 1** teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- 2** teaspoons prepared horseradish

Peel potatoes; slice in half lengthwise, then into ¼-inch thick slices crosswise. Place in a saucepan, add chicken broth to cover, place over high heat, and bring to a boil. Cook until potatoes are just tender, about 10 minutes; do not overcook. Drain, reserving broth for another use. Place potato slices in a large mixing bowl; add salt and pepper, wine, olive oil, and vinegar; gently toss and set aside at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Chop the shrimp into ½-inch pieces and add to potatoes. Add parsley and basil, and chopped green onions; reserve a handful for garnish.

Mix together mayonnaise, sour cream, lemon juice and zest, and horseradish; add to potato mixture and gently toss to combine. Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle with remaining green onions. Garnish with basil just before serving.

Makes about 6 servings.



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Hot German Potato Salad

- 20 new potatoes, skins on
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and chopped
- 8 slices bacon, chopped
- 1 cup diced onions
- 2 tablespoons Creole seasoning
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 3/4 cup vinegar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions

Excerpted with permission from The Encyclopedia of Cajun and Creole Cuisine by Chef John Folse.

Place potatoes in a large pot of lightly salted water and bring to a boil. Boil 20 minutes or until tender. Drain and cool under cold running water. Slice potatoes 1/4-inch thick and place in a large bowl. Mix in eggs and set aside. Sauté bacon in a 10-inch skillet over high heat 7 minutes or until browned. Remove bacon from skillet with a slotted spoon and set aside. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons of bacon fat and return skillet to high heat.

Stir in onions and sauté 3 to 5 minutes, scraping bottom of skillet occasionally, until onions are golden. Sprinkle in Creole seasoning, and whisk in flour. Slowly whisk in stock, vinegar, and sugar. Cook 5 to 6 minutes or until mixture is thick, whisking frequently. Remove from heat. Fold dressing into potato and egg mixture. Add green onions and cooked bacon. Blend well.

Makes 8 to 10 servings.



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Classic Creamy Potato Salad

- 3½ pounds russet potatoes
- ¼ cup sweet pickle juice
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- ⅓ cup chopped dill pickles
- ⅓ cup chopped sweet pickles
- ⅓ cup finely chopped red onion
- ⅓ cup finely chopped celery
- ⅓ cup finely sliced green onions, green parts only
- 2 tablespoons chopped green olives
- 2 tablespoons chopped pimientos
- 4 teaspoons Creole or grainy mustard
- ⅓ cup buttermilk, as needed
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- salt to taste
- paprika for garnish



Wash potatoes; place in a large saucepan and cover with water. Place over high heat and bring to a boil. Cook until just tender; a small paring knife should meet a little resistance at the center of the potato. Drain potatoes and rinse under cool water; peel when cool enough to handle; cut into half-inch dice, place in a large mixing bowl, and drizzle with pickle juice.

Using a microplane grater, grate eggs into another mixing bowl. Add mayonnaise, dill pickles, sweet pickles, red onion,

celery, green onions, olives, pimientos, and mustard; stir to combine. Add buttermilk as needed to make a thick dressing; stir in Worcestershire sauce, black pepper, and salt; taste and adjust seasoning.

Add dressing to diced potatoes; fold gently to combine. Transfer to serving bowl and sprinkle with paprika, if desired. Serve warm, or refrigerate and serve cold.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Seafood Boil Potato Salad

- 2½ pounds potatoes, left over from a seafood boil
- 1 cup finely diced white onion
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped
- 4 green onions, finely sliced, green part only
- 1⅓ cups mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons Creole or other grainy mustard
- 1 teaspoon Creole seasoning mix
- salt to taste

Cut potatoes into bite-sized pieces; place in a large mixing bowl. Add onion, celery, and green onions; toss to combine. Whisk together mayonnaise, mustard, and Creole seasoning; fold into potato mixture. Taste and add salt if needed.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.





Pesto Potato Salad

- 2 pounds small potatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup diced green bell pepper
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- ½ cup Basil Pesto (recipe follows)
- salt and pepper to taste
- grated Parmesan cheese for garnish

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Wash potatoes; place in a large pot and cover with 1 inch of cold water, generously salted. Place over high heat and bring to a boil; reduce heat to a brisk simmer and cook until just tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and spread on a clean kitchen towel to dry; halve or quarter when cool enough to handle. Add olive oil to a large mixing bowl; add potatoes and toss to coat. Spread in a single layer on rimmed baking sheets. Transfer to oven and roast, turning once, until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes.

Transfer to a large mixing bowl and add the diced peppers and Basil Pesto; toss gently to combine. Taste and add salt and pepper; serve warm. Pass the grated Parmesan when serving.

Makes 4 servings.

Basil Pesto

- 4 cups loosely packed fresh basil
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- ¼ cup finely chopped toasted pecans
- extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup finely grated Pecorino Romano cheese
- ¼ cup finely grated Parmegiano-Reggiano cheese
- salt to taste

Place basil, salt, garlic, and pecans in the bowl of a food processor. Add 2 tablespoon olive oil and pulse, scraping down sides occasionally, until finely chopped. Add cheeses and pulse to combine; add more olive oil as desired. Taste and add salt if needed.

Makes a scant cup.

Muffuletta Potato Salad

This is best served warm or at room temperature; individual portions can be microwaved for just a few seconds to start the cheese melting.

- 1 pound new potatoes, skin-on
- 1 pint jar Italian olive salad, drained, oil reserved
- ½ pound baked ham, diced
- ¼ pound salami, minced
- ¼ pound provolone or mozzarella cheese, diced small
- ½ cup finely grated Parmesan cheese

Place potatoes in a large pot of generously salted water; place over high heat and bring to a boil. Cook until potatoes are just tender, about 20 minutes. Drain and rinse with cool water to stop the cooking process; when cool enough to handle, cut into bite-sized pieces

and place in a large mixing bowl. Add the drained olive salad, ham, salami, and cheeses; toss gently to combine. Add reserved olive salad oil to taste; serve at room temperature.

Makes about 12 servings.



Bleu Cheese Potato Salad

- 2 pounds medium russet potatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup crumbled good-quality bleu cheese
- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons finely minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- buttermilk, as needed
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 3 green onions, finely sliced, green tops only
- 4 slices cooked bacon, crumbled

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Wash potatoes; place in a large pot and cover with 1 inch of cold water, generously salted. Place over high heat and bring to a boil; reduce heat to a brisk simmer and cook until just tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and spread on a clean kitchen towel to dry; halve or quarter when cool enough to handle. Add olive oil to a large mixing bowl; add potatoes and toss to coat. Spread in a single layer on rimmed baking sheets. Transfer to oven and roast, turning once, until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes.

Place the cheese in a small mixing bowl. Add sour cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice, garlic, and black pepper; combine. Add a little buttermilk if mixture is too thick. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour and up to 2 days.

Place potatoes in a large mixing bowl and add the green onions and bacon. Add reserved bleu cheese dressing as desired, tossing to coat. Serve warm, or refrigerate for up to 1 day.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Loaded Roasted Potato Salad

- 2 pounds small potatoes, skin on
- 4 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 8 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Wash potatoes; place in a large pot and cover with 1 inch of cold water, generously salted. Place over high heat and bring to a boil; reduce heat to a brisk simmer and cook until just tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and spread on a clean kitchen towel to dry; halve or quarter when cool enough to handle.

Add melted butter to a large mixing bowl. Add potatoes, onion, garlic, salt and pepper, oregano, and thyme; toss to combine. Spread in a single layer on rimmed baking

- ¼ cup buttermilk
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 pound small broccoli florets, lightly steamed
- 1 cup (4 ounces) grated sharp Cheddar
- crumbled bacon for garnish
- sliced green onions for garnish

sheets. Transfer to oven and roast, turning once, until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes.

Whisk together sour cream and buttermilk.

Transfer roasted potatoes, onions, and garlic to a large mixing bowl. Toss together broccoli and shredded cheese; add to potatoes. Add sour cream mixture; gently toss to coat. Transfer to a serving dish, garnish with bacon and green onions, and serve hot.

Makes 8 to 10 servings.

