



## Kid-Made Classic Croquetas

By Dylan Sabuco

**Prep Time** 15 / **Cook Time** 20 / **Serves** 4 - 6

### Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**chop:** to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

**combine:** to merge two or more ingredients into one mixture, like a batter of flour, eggs, and milk.

**crack:** to break open or apart a food to get what's inside, like an egg or a coconut.

**measure:** to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

**shape:** to form food into a specific shape by hand or with a cutting tool—examples are cutting cookie dough into shapes with cookie cutters, forming bread dough into a roll or crescent shape, and rolling ground meat into a meatball.

**stir-fry:** to cook meat, fish, or vegetables rapidly over high heat while stirring briskly—used in Asian cooking.

**whisk:** to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

### Equipment

- Large mixing bowl
- Liquid measuring cup
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Whisk
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Small pot + lid

- Slotted spoon, tongs, or heat-resistant spatula
- Plate or tray
- Paper towels

## Ingredients

### Kid-Made Classic Croquetas

- 1 pkg instant mashed potatoes (about 10 oz)
- 1 C water
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 egg **\*\***(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1 T flax seed + 1/4 C warm water—more info below)**\*\***
- 1 C all-purpose flour + more for dusting hands **\*\***(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free flour)**\*\***
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 pinch black pepper
- 1/4 C vegetable oil + more if needed

## Food Allergen Substitutions

### Kid-Made Classic Croquetas

**Egg:** For 1 egg in Croquetas, substitute 1 T flax seed + 1/4 C warm water. Stir and soak flaxseeds in warm water for 5 minutes or until fully absorbed and thickened.

**Gluten/Wheat:** Substitute gluten-free flour for all-purpose flour in Croquetas.

## Instructions

### Kid-Made Classic Croquetas

#### frying safety

Make sure to always have your lid nearby. Smoke and splatter are hazardous and need to be treated with care. As soon as you finish using the fryer oil, turn the heat off and turn on a ventilation fan above your stove to help with any smoking oil.

#### measure + whisk + chop

Hola! Croquetas (krow-KET-ahs) are a Spanish tapas treat! Crispy mashed potatoes will be your new favorite! Combine **1 package instant mashed potatoes** and **1 cup water** in a large mixing bowl and

whisk together until the potatoes become creamy and smooth. The more you whisk the more the mashed potatoes will thicken. Set aside. Chop **1 garlic clove** until it's minced and add that to the potato bowl.

### crack + combine

Crack **1 egg** and measure **1 cup flour**, **1 teaspoon salt**, and **1 pinch of black pepper** and add them all to the mashed potato bowl. Stir until all the ingredients are blended.

### shape + measure + heat

Using a tablespoon, scoop **1 ball of the mashed potato mixture** onto a cutting board. Make as many as possible. Gently roll the balls of potato in your hands to smooth them out. (Coat your hands in a small amount of flour to prevent sticking.) Adults place a small pot on medium heat and measure **1/4 cup vegetable oil** to add to the small pot.

### fry + cool

After about 1 minute of heating the oil, adults start placing 6 of the potato balls in the oil gently. They will begin to sizzle. Fry them on each side for 3 minutes or until golden brown all over. Add more oil if the pot is too dry for the next batch. Remove the golden Croquetas on a paper towel-lined plate or tray. Cool for at least 3 minutes before serving to prevent burning mouths. Serve with Radical Red Pepper Sauce (see recipe) or another dip.

## Featured Ingredient: Potato!

Hi, my name is Spud! That's my nickname, though. I'm actually a Potato!

"I'm sometimes a bit dirty because I grow down in the soil, but I clean up just fine. You may notice I sometimes have 'eyes' on my skin. That's where I sprout so new potato plants can grow. You can use the end of a vegetable peeler or a knife to remove those sprouts unless you're going to plant me! We are versatile, starchy vegetables that you can leave whole, slice, dice, shred, or mash and bake, boil, fry, grill, or roast!"

### History & Etymology

Potatoes are the foremost vegetable crop in the world! They are root vegetables native to the Americas. Scientists believe the first potatoes were cultivated about 8,000 years ago by hunters and gatherers near Lake Titicaca—high in the Andes mountains, on the border between Peru and Bolivia.

Those first farmers obtained the cultivated potato by domesticating wild potato plants that grew prolifically around the lake. Over the following millennia, people in the Andes developed potato varieties for growing at different altitudes and in other climates.

In 1532, the Spaniards invaded Peru searching for gold, but they took a different treasure back to Europe: the potato! Over the next 300 years, the potato became a staple crop in Europe and soon found its way to India, China, and Japan. China now grows the most potatoes worldwide.

The potato has been a staple ingredient in the German diet since the 17th century when King Frederick was known to give seeds to citizens and demonstrate how to plant them for food.

Famines occurred in the mid-1700s, and people in Germany realized the importance of potatoes because they could be grown in harsh environments.

Where are most of the potatoes produced in the United States? In Idaho! Approximately one-third of all potatoes in the US are grown there.

The potato was the first vegetable grown in outer space!

President Thomas Jefferson was the first person to serve french fries in the United States (in 1802 in the White House).

Potatoes are so popular that a plastic toy called "Mr. Potato Head" has been sold by Hasbro since 1952. Initially, they sold it as separate parts, like eyes, ears, mouth, hats, etc., that could be attached to an actual potato with pushpins. Due to too many ruined potatoes and new safety rules, in 1964, Hasbro added a plastic potato body with holes to insert the plastic body parts and clothing. The toy was the first to be advertised on television.

The English word "potato" comes from the mid-16th century from the Spanish "patata," which may have been a hybrid of "batata" (sweet potato) from the extinct Taíno language and "papa" (potato) from the Quechua language.

## Anatomy

Potatoes are tubers and are members of the Nightshade family, which also includes tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, and tobacco.

The potato plant has a relatively short lifespan of anywhere from 80 to 150 days, determined by the variety of the potato. Furthermore, according to the International Potato Center in Peru, there are more than 4,000 varieties, with most found in the Andes Mountains!

Potatoes do not grow from seeds like other vegetables and fruits. Instead, they grow from "seed potatoes," which sprout and form roots underground.

During its first stages of life, sprouts form from the eyes of the primary tuber. First, farmers prepare the earth by tilling it in rows that form ridges. Next, they remove stones from the soil to help the potatoes grow in uniform, oval shapes. Then, the seed potatoes are planted and covered with dirt for protection.

Seed potatoes are planted in the Spring so that the warmth from the sun can stimulate the plants to grow. First, roots form from the seed potatoes, and new shoots reach up through the soil toward the warm sun. Soon, green leaves grow on the shoots, establishing the potato plants. Then roots spread underground in the earth, and the potatoes grow from these roots. Potatoes are relatively easy to grow, even in harsh environments.

## How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Choose potatoes that are smooth, plump, free from blemishes, cuts, and decay, and that don't give when

you squeeze them.

Potatoes start getting soft when they go bad, so choose firm potatoes at the grocery store.

Smell potatoes before buying them: they should smell fresh and faintly of dirt since they grow in soil.

Waxy potatoes are best for boiling and steaming, as they contain less starch and won't absorb as much liquid. Examples of waxy potatoes are Yukon gold, fingerling, Carola, LaRette, and Austrian Crescent.

Medium-starch, all-purpose potatoes (red, purple, Onaway, and goldilocks varieties) work well when baked, roasted, fried, and used in soups and gratins.

Russet potatoes are best for frying (such as in hash browns and french fries), as they contain less starch and will get crisper.

Store potatoes in open or hole-punched paper bags (not plastic) to keep air circulating around the potatoes. Plastic bags can trap moisture and cause potatoes to rot quicker. Also, keep the bag in a dark, dry space. Chlorophyll will develop and produce a tell-tale green tinge if you store potatoes in too bright a place. If this happens, a toxic compound called solanine also forms, and it is best to toss any green potato in the garbage.

## Nutrition

Potatoes, with their skin, are rich in carbohydrates and a good source of energy. In addition, they have a high content of vitamin C and potassium, and protein that is well matched to human needs.

One cup of cooked potatoes contains 32 percent of the daily value of vitamin B6. This vitamin is a major antioxidant (antioxidants help clear the body of harmful substances). We need B6 for our brains and hearts, helping us learn and focus better, keep our moods up, and keep our brains sharp. Vitamin B6 is also required to make all new cells in the body, which happens every minute of our lives!