



Mama's American Fried Potatoes

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 10 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

dice: to cut foods into small pieces of equal size so that the food is cooked evenly or looks uniform and pleasant when used in the recipe.

fry: to fry in a pan in a small amount of fat.

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

stir: to mix together two or more ingredients with a spoon or spatula, usually in a circle pattern, or figure eight, or in whatever direction you like!

Equipment

- Large skillet
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Medium mixing bowl
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon or heat-resistant spatula

Ingredients

Mama's American Fried Potatoes

- 2 medium russet potatoes
- 3 green onions
- 1 tsp ground mustard
- 1 tsp salt

1 pinch ground black pepper

2 T vegetable oil

Food Allergen Substitutions

Mama's American Fried Potatoes

Instructions

Mama's American Fried Potatoes

chop + measure

Start by chopping **3 green onions** and **2 medium russet potatoes** into a small dice. Place the green onions and potatoes in a mixing bowl.

season + mix

Measure and add **1 teaspoon ground mustard**, **1 teaspoon salt**, **1 pinch of black pepper**, and **2 tablespoons vegetable oil** to the bowl. Mix all of the ingredients with a wooden spoon.

sauté + serve

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, pour in all the ingredients from your mixing bowl. The mixture will sauté until golden brown or for about 10 minutes. Stir as frequently as your heart desires. After the potatoes become golden brown, remove them from the skillet and serve.

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!