

# SCALLOPED POTATOES

Serves 8.

By Dennis W. Viau; an original recipe.

To my surprise, there are almost no recipes for Scalloped Potatoes in my cookbooks and food textbooks. The reason: There is no classic recipe. You can do whatever you want. So I decided to make Scalloped Potatoes that are rich in cheese. I used mild cheddar, but you can use any cheese you prefer. With no traditional recipe, you are free to experiment.



## Ingredients:

2¼ pounds (1kg) potatoes, thinly sliced  
3 tablespoons butter  
2 tablespoons flour  
1½ cups (~350ml) milk or cream  
1½ cups (4 oz./113g) shredded cheddar cheese  
Salt & pepper to taste

### *Optional (to be added to the white sauce):*

The leaves from a few sprigs fresh thyme  
Chopped fresh Italian parsley  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
Any ingredients of your choosing

## Directions:

Slice the potatoes about ⅛ inch (3mm) thin and place in a large bowl of cold water. Set aside.

Butter a shallow baking dish.

Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat and then add the flour. Mix until combined. Reduce the heat to low and cook, stirring constantly, for about a minute. This is a “white roux”.

Add the milk or cream and whisk until blended to create a “white sauce” (one of the “mother sauces”). If thin, the sauce can be cooked over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened, about 5 minutes.

Remove from the heat and add two thirds (1 cup) of the shredded cheese and stir until the cheese melts and is thoroughly blended into the sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Add other herbs you like. Set aside.

Heat your oven to 400°F (200°C) with a rack in the upper third.

Drain the sliced potatoes thoroughly. Arrange a layer in the bottom of the baking dish, using about a third of the potatoes, and then spoon about half the cheese sauce over the slices, spreading evenly. Arrange a second layer of potatoes, like the first, and cover with the remaining sauce. Finish the dish by arranging the remaining potato slices in a scalloped pattern on top (you might not use all the potatoes, depending on the size of the baking dish). Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top, distributing evenly.

Bake on the upper rack for 50 to 60 minutes, until the potatoes in the center are tender and the cheese is browned on top. Start watching the dish closely after about 30 minutes. If the cheese appears to be browning too rapidly, cover the dish lightly with a sheet of aluminum foil.

Remove from the oven and allow to rest about 10 minutes, and then serve.

The **Step By Step** guide begins on the following page.

## STEP-BY-STEP

1



In this recipe I used Klondike Goldust potatoes, which are supposed to be similar to Yukon Golds. They are a firm potato that holds up well in baking.

2



Although I used a mandoline to slice these potatoes, I have an electric rotary slicer that works better. I also made a similar dish using a very sharp kitchen knife to slice the potatoes about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch (3mm) thin. If you have a good knife, you don't need a fancy device (although they do reduce the amount of work).

**3**

A roux is simply butter and flour. Cook for about a minute to remove the flour's raw flavor.

**4**

Add milk, cream, or half and half. Then mix well to blend thoroughly.

5



When the mixture comes to a boil, the liquid should be slightly thickened. It can be cooked longer — 6 to 8 minutes — to thicken more, but for this recipe the sauce only needs to be slightly thick. This is a white sauce, to which you can add other ingredients to make a variety of complex, finished sauces, such as Béchamel.

6



Remove the sauce from the heat and then add about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the shredded cheddar cheese.



7



Stir the cheese into the sauce until fully blended. You can also add herbs. I added fresh thyme from my herb garden. Season with salt and pepper.

8



To assemble the dish, arrange about a third of the sliced potatoes on the bottom of a greased baking dish, then cover with about half the cheese sauce. Arrange a second layer of potatoes in the dish and drape again with the remaining sauce. Save the best looking potato slices for the top.

9



For the top, arrange the remaining potato slices in a scalloped pattern

10



Finish by placing the remaining shredded cheese on top. This dish is ready to go into the oven.



Bake until browned on top and tender in the center, 50 to 60 minutes. Serve hot.

## Conclusion

This cheesy Scalloped Potatoes dish is easy to make. The result is a delicious side dish that looks as good as it tastes.