

S E C R E T S C A L L O P E D P O T A T O E S

Recipe Shared by Chef Travis Kukull

The recipe may seem simple enough but it can be very technical which, in the past, has scared most people away from trying. The secret here is we use cream and Comte cheese (which is a French gruyere). This cheese may be hard to find in Alaska, and I find a good substitute can be regular gruyere, or Swiss with a little Pecorino Romano.

For equipment, you will need: A mandolin slicer, a 9inch by width 12 inch by length and 4 inch deep stainless steel baking pan (ceramic or aluminum works well too), a sieve, cheese grater, and ladle.

Oven Bake 425 to 450 degrees

Serves 12

• Ingredients:

- 1 quart heavy cream
- 1 T dried thyme
- 1 T dried rosemary
- ¼ cup roasted garlic
- ¼ cup salt
- 1 T olive oil

Steep the above ingredients in a sauce pan on medium heat until the salt is dissolved. If you have rind from your cheese, steep it with the cream as well. Strain the cream through your sieve, saving the cream and discarding the rest.

Ingredients cont:

- 18 to 20 medium sized Yukon gold potatoes peeled
- 1 pound Gruyere cheese grated

I spray the pan down with a little bit of vegetable oil first and then I start to slice potato chip thin slices of the Yukon golds into the bottom of the pan. We want to layer the potatoes so they look like fish scales.

Once that first layer is done I add a small amount of the steeped cream, 2 ounces or so. We don't want to add so much that the potatoes float, otherwise we might end up with something soupy. I also do not add cheese on this first layer because I don't want to cause it to burn too much in the oven, it will burn around the edges some but in a good way.

Repeat this process with each layer, adding a small amount of cream and sprinkling a small amount of cheese along the way. We want to cover about 2/3rds of the pan maybe even 3/4s, depending on the pan you are using. When I get about half way up I like to press down on the potatoes to disperse the cream. If it rises way above the potatoes then you are adding too much cream. If it rises to just meet them at an equal to just over level then you are on the right track.

Note: you might end up with more cream than you need and some odds and ends of potatoes. I usually combine the leftover product together in a pan on the stove and steep on low until the potatoes are soft then I puree them. I'll use this product in chowder, on pizzas or pastas as white sauce (great with clams and bacon bits), in meatballs, and in my bread just to name a few creative applications.

Once we have assembled the dish, we cover it with tin foil and place in a 425 to 450 degree oven for 50 to 60 min. After this time the potatoes should be al dente. Now we can remove the foil and place the dish back in the oven for 15 more minutes so we may brown the top of the scalloped potatoes and thicken the cream.

I let them rest for a few hours before I cut into them. This helps the starch bind and create a high standing piece. Cut the potatoes out evenly. I cut it into 18 pieces but 12 pieces works fine too. They last a while in the fridge and are great as leftovers throughout the week.

These are great as a side to any meal, especially with your Thanksgiving Turkey and some gravy. I will often roast mushrooms as a topping.

