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Gratin Dauphinois – French Creamy Potato Bake

November 15, 2018 / 2 Comments /

The other day I was taking a sizzling *Gratin Dauphinois* out of the oven when a couple of friends asked for the recipe. Jings! I realised I hadn't even posted the recipe yet. So, without further ado, here is my version of the classic French creamy potato bake, which originates from the Dauphiné region of South-East France.



It's pretty hearty with all that cream and so I don't make it often. If you love a potato bake without the cream, then you'll love this delicious [Potato Gratin Savoyard recipe](#), which instead bakes in chicken or vegetable stock and is smothered in plenty of grated cheese which bubbles just as beautifully.

Gratin Dauphinois with Cheese or Without Cheese?

According to *Larousse Gastronomique*, it states that you "can add cheese" to the Gratin Dauphinois, which leads me to mention the true definition it gives of the French verb "*Gratiner*":

To cook or finish cooking a preparation in the oven, so that it presents a thin golden brown crusted layer on the surface. It's quite delicate to obtain such a result by using breadcrumbs to a point where it bakes further than a brown colour. On the other hand, it's relatively easy to add a superficial browning to the surface by adding grated cheese or breadcrumbs ...

In general, I personally prefer it without the cheese, as it's easier to pair with the rest of the meal. If entertaining, it also means that we can still serve a *plateau de fromages* with French cheeses with a little less of the guilt!



The process is very easy. First and foremost, choose a waxy potato variety such as Charlotte, Jersey Royals or Belle de Fontenay, as they keep their shape and have just enough starch to thicken up the creamy sauce as it bakes in the oven.

Slice the potatoes and coat them in hot milk and cream, nutmeg and seasoning, throw into a greased baking dish and bake. I often make this in advance earlier in the day if making for dinner guests - it takes the stress out of the meal preparation when you can reheat in about 15-20 minutes!



When I say seasoning, why not add a special touch of truffle salt? It gives a subtle background of earthy festive luxury.

Gratin Dauphinois

Normally a Gratin Dauphinois is served as a side-dish; I love to serve it with roasted chicken or pan-fried chicken I've rolled in thin slices of smoked bacon (*poitrine fumée*). However, it's also great on its own as a light supper and ideal for vegetarians.



Gratin Dauphinois

★★★★★
5 from 1 vote

Prep Time

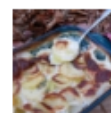
15 mins

Cook Time

45 mins

Total Time

1 hr



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Easy recipe for the French classic, Gratin Dauphinois. Enjoy this creamy, hearty side-dish which doesn't necessarily contain any cheese (ideal for vegetarians) but if you prefer a sprinkling on top, be my guest.

Course: Side Dish, Supper

Cuisine: French

Keyword: creamy potato bake, gratin dauphinois, potato cream gratin

Servings: 6 people

Calories: 210 kcal

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Ingredients

- 750 g (1lb 10oz) potatoes waxy varieties (Belle de Fontenay, Charlotte, Jersey Royals)
- 2-3 cloves garlic finely chopped (vein removed)
- 300 ml (10fl oz) full fat milk (half pint)
- 150 ml (5fl oz) double cream (or liquid crème fraîche)
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg freshly grated or ground (no more than this)
- salt and ground black pepper to taste (I add a few pinches of truffle salt)
- 1/2 tsp fresh thyme (optional)
- knob butter to grease the dish
- 100 g (3.5oz) emmental or gruyère cheese finely grated

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 190°C/170°C fan/ 375°F/Gas 5.
2. Peel the potatoes, wash and pat dry on kitchen paper. Slice them as thin as you can (3mm) either by hand (like I've done here) or with a mandoline (watch your fingers!) or the slicer attachment of a food processor.
3. Heat the milk, cream and chopped garlic (depending how much you like your garlic!) in a medium saucepan (able to hold all the potatoes) until boiling. Turn down the heat to low, add the nutmeg, salt and pepper (a few turns of the pepper mill) then add the sliced potatoes (no need to wash, as you need the starch to thicken when it bakes).
4. Cook for about 5 minutes, turning the slices over with a spoon so that the potatoes are well covered and heated in the cream. (If you prefer to add cheese, add it here).
5. Butter a baking dish (26x18cm/10x7inch). Add the potato mixture to the dish, spreading them out evenly with a spatula. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until golden brown

Recipe Notes

If making for guests, prepare 2-3 hours in advance and reheat covered in foil for 15 minutes before serving to make life easier.

Nutritional Values: 210 Calories per serving (without the cheese); 5g protein; 9g carbohydrates; 27g fat.

Matching wines: As this is a side-dish, it all depends on what you're eating with it but since it's a real winter warming dish I'd go for a gutsy, oily white such as a Chardonnay, Voignier or Chenin Blanc and for a red, a good Burgundy (Pinot Noir) or Beaujolais Cru such as Morgon.

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