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## Ask Aunt Daisy

## POTATOES ARE IMPORTANT



FOR several winters potatoes were scarce, and we had to console ourselves by devising various ways of using rice and parsnips and carrots and so on as substitutes, and pretend to like it. What a joy, therefore, to have plenty of good South Island potatoes this year—Suttons and Dakotas—and be able to make our favourite potato dishes, not forgetting the old-fashioned "hot baked potatoes" in their skins, with a cross cut in one side and the floury tasty potato exposed and plenty of butter forked in. A favourite supper on a cold evening!

Potatoes are one of our most important staple foods, and should be eaten every day. Besides supplying carbohydrates (heat and energy) and protein (for building up the body), they are rich in Vitamin C, which is the preventive of scurvy. Even slight scurvy saps our resistance to infection, and causes spongy gums and pyorrhea and a susceptibility to colds. When a failure of the potato crop occurred in Ireland in 1847, and in Norway in 1914, scurvy made its appearance there. Some years ago, an international enquiry into food-values appealed for a general use of potatoes, because of their high protective value. They also play a valuable part in neutralising acidity in the digestive organs. Potatoes are not unduly fattening; and, as I learned in Honolulu when studying the taro, tuber-starch has a different effect from cereal-starch; it contains more calcium and phosphorus.

It is very much better to cook potatoes whole and in their skins, whether baked, boiled or steamed. It is easy to skin them when cooked. Just scrub them; if baking, do not let them scorch, or the skin will stick to the potato. Many people advocate putting the potatoes first in cold water and bringing to the boil, for about 5 minutes, before putting into the oven to bake, to make them more floury.

### Stuffed Jacket Potatoes

Cut the hot baked potatoes in half lengthways, holding them with a napkin. Scoop out the floury potato, and mix with flaked or mashed fish, either smoked, tinned or steamed; or minced cooked liver, kidney or ham; or grated or mashed cheese with a dash of mustard; or mashed cooked carrot and a dash of chutney. Pile up the filling in the potato shells, dot with butter, and put back in oven to heat. Work quickly. Endless mixtures can be thought up, but fish and cheese are the most nourishing.

### Stelk

This is a Scottish dish. Steam 6 or 8 potatoes and then peel them while hot. Have ready, boiled in a little milk, a few shallots, or spring onions, or chives, already shredded. Mash the hot potatoes with this hot milk and onion, beating well, seasoning to taste. Serve very hot, with a dab of butter on each helping. Nice with toast or one of the modern "crisp-breads."

### Savoury Potato Cakes

Steam the potatoes, and while still hot, mash well with butter and an egg beaten with a tablespoon of milk. Add a small grated onion and a little chopped parsley, if liked; pepper and salt to taste. Shape into round cakes with floured hands, brush over with another beaten egg, and roll them in very

fine breadcrumbs. Fry in boiling fat a golden brown and drain on tissue paper. Serve very hot. Yesterday's left-over mashed potatoes may also be used this way, if warmed first with a little milk.

### Potato Soup

Peel thinly, and cut in slices about 1 lb. potatoes and 2 small onions. Put into saucepan with an ounce of butter, put lid on, and let cook together for about 5 minutes, shaking the pan from time to time. Then add about a pint of water and simmer gently till soft and pulpy. Add an equal quantity of milk with a dessertspoon of sago soaking in it. Stir well together and cook slowly till the sago is transparent. Season to taste.

### Potato Scones

Put a cup of mashed potatoes in a saucepan to warm, with 2 tablespoons of brown sugar, and 1 tablespoon of butter. Add 1 beaten egg. Stir in 2

### Bachelor Girl's Cake

Half a pound of butter, ½ lb. sugar. Put in a saucepan and melt. Beat 2 eggs and add, stir till thick. Mix in 1 tablespoon cocoa, ½ teaspoon vanilla, ¼ lb. chopped walnuts and 1 cup sultanas. Lastly add 1 lb. round wine biscuits broken with rolling pin, not too fine. Press into greased square tin. Ready next day.

### Churchill's Cigars.

Four ounces butter (melted), 3 tablespoons coconut, 1 dessertspoon cocoa, 8 wine or malt biscuits (crushed with rolling pin), 4 oz. icing sugar, mixed fruit or nuts to taste. Add icing sugar to butter, then other ingredients. Shape into cigars or balls and roll in some more coconut. No cooking at all.

cups of fine wholemeal sifted with 1½ teaspoons baking powder and a pinch of salt. Beat, adding milk as necessary. Roll out, and cut into scones. Bake as usual.

### Potato and Cheese Gems

Three cups mashed potatoes, 1 cup milk, 2 eggs, ¾ cup grated cheese, pinch salt, 2 dessertspoons butter. Dissolve butter and salt in milk, slightly warmed. Add beaten eggs, then add the whole to potato and cheese mixed together. Stir slowly and mix well. Drop into buttered, very hot gem irons, sprinkle with flour and cook till brown on top. Split and butter, and eat hot.

### Potato and Fish Cakes

Put cold boiled (or steamed) fish through mincer, or chop very finely; also chop some chives and parsley. Mix well with about half the quantity of mashed potato; pepper and salt to taste; a little anchovy sauce if liked. Form into balls, dip in flour and then into beaten eggs, coating well. Fry in hot smoking fat till brown, and drain on tissue paper.

### Potato and Cheese Souffle

Boil 1 lb. potatoes, then skin them. Add 2 tablespoons each of butter, and of wholemeal breadcrumbs soaked in