

Creamy Potato and Bacon Soup: The Ultimate Comfort Food Bowl

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5 min

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INGREDIENTS

8 slices bacon, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 tablespoon olive oil (if needed)
1 medium yellow onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 cups chicken broth (low sodium recommended)
4-5 medium Russet or Yukon Gold potatoes (about 2 lbs), peeled and diced into 1/2-inch cubes
1 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1 1/2 cups milk (whole or 2%)
1/2 cup heavy cream (or extra milk for a lighter soup)
1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese, plus more for topping
Optional Garnishes: Sliced green onions or fresh chives, extra sour cream

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get this comforting potato and bacon soup simmering!
2. Cook : Bacon: In a large Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot, cook the bacon pieces over medium heat until crispy. Use a slotted spoon to remove the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Reserve 1-2 tablespoons of bacon grease in the pot (drain off any excess). If you don't have enough bacon grease, add olive oil to make up the difference.
3. SautØ Aromatics: Add the chopped onion and celery to the pot with the reserved bacon grease (or olive oil). Cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened. Add the minced garlic and cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
4. Add : Potatoes & Seasonings: Stir in the diced potatoes, salt, black pepper, and dried thyme. Cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring to coat the potatoes in the aromatics and seasonings.
5. Add : Broth & Simmer: Pour in the chicken broth, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Bring the mixture to a boil.
6. Cook : Potatoes: Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let it simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until the potatoes are very tender.
7. Mash (Optional): Once the potatoes are tender, use a potato masher or the back of a large spoon to gently mash about 1/4 to 1/3 of the potatoes against the side of the pot. This will naturally thicken the soup and create a creamier consistency while still leaving some potato chunks.
8. Add : Dairy & Cheese: Stir in the milk, heavy cream

(if using), and 1 cup of the shredded sharp cheddar cheese. Stir well until the cheese is completely melted and the soup is smooth and creamy. Bring the soup back to a gentle simmer (do not boil rapidly once dairy is added).

9. **Serve & :** Garnish: Taste and adjust seasoning (salt, pepper) if needed. Ladle into bowls, top with the remaining crumbled crispy bacon, extra shredded cheddar cheese, sliced green onions or chives, and a dollop of sour cream if desired. Serve hot.

SWAPS & NOTES

Bacon: Use thick-cut bacon for more flavor and texture. Cook it until extra crispy so it crumbles well and adds a fantastic crunch.

You can use pre-cooked bacon bits for convenience, but freshly cooked offers superior flavor.

Potatoes: Russet potatoes are excellent for thickening the soup as they break down easily.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Crispy Bacon is Key: Make sure your bacon is cooked to a nice crispness for the best texture and flavor contrast in the soup.

Don't Drain All Bacon Fat: A little bit of bacon grease in the pot adds incredible flavor to the sautéed vegetables.

Mash Potatoes for Thickness: Mashing some of the cooked potatoes is a natural way to thicken the soup without needing a roux, creating a hearty texture.

Gentle Simmer with Dairy: Once you add milk and cream, keep the heat low and maintain a gentle simmer to prevent the dairy from scorching or curdling.

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