

Potato, Leek & Onion Gratin



The potato mixture for this recipe can be prepared a day ahead before baking, then covered in plastic wrap and refrigerated. Bring the gratin to room temperature before baking. If you're lucky enough to have leftovers, they keep well for several days in the fridge. Serve with short ribs, grilled salmon steaks or just about anything.

Makes 6–8 servings.

Ingredients:

2-1/2 lbs	Large baking potatoes, about 4	1.25 kg
	Olive oil	
1/2	Large Spanish onion (about 10 oz/300 g), diced	
1	Leek (about 10 oz/300 g), cut in 1/2" (1.5 cm) thick rings	
2 tsp	Crushed garlic	(10 ml)
	Salt & freshly ground black pepper	
1/4 cup	35% cream	(50 ml)
1/2 lb	Whipped cream cheese	(250 g)
1	Large egg	
	Nutmeg	

Topping:

1/4 cup	Fresh (homemade) bread crumbs	(75 ml)
1/4 cup	Freshly grated Parmesan (Parmigiana Regiano is the very best)	(75 ml)
2 tbsp	Butter, softened	(50 ml)
1 tbsp	Chopped fresh parsley	(15 ml)

METHOD:

- Scrub potatoes; dry well. Bake in 400 °F (200 °C) oven for 20 minutes. Quickly puncture potatoes a few times to release steam; bake for 20–40 minutes longer or until tender.
- Meanwhile, in a skillet, heat oil over medium heat; cook onion and leek, stirring, for about 5 minutes or until softened. Add garlic; season with salt and pepper to taste. Continue cooking until onions are tender but not browned.
- Halve potatoes and remove pulp to large bowl; mash well. Mix together cream, cream cheese and egg, blend into potatoes. Stir in onion mixture and 1/2 the parsley. Season with salt, a liberal amount of pepper and a pinch of nutmeg to taste. Spread in 3-inch (8 cm) deep, lightly buttered 8–10 cup (2.0 l) round baking dish to make about 2-inch (5 cm) deep layer. Bake in 350 °F (180 °C) oven for 45 minutes.

Topping:

- Mix together bread crumbs, cheese and butter; sprinkle over potatoes. Bake for about 20 minutes longer or until golden brown. Garnish with the other half of the parsley.