

Pommes Aligot (Cheesy Mashed Potatoes)

Pommes Aligot, or cheesy potato fondue, is an incredibly easy dish to master. The key components are good mashed potatoes, lots of cheese, and the desire for an arm workout.

Ingredients:

1 - 1/4 pounds of yellow potatoes, boiled until tender, drained, peeled, then mashed
3 ounces of unsalted butter
4 ounces of heavy cream or creme fraiche

1 clove garlic mashed
sea salt, pepper
1 pound of shredded cheese (no, that is not a typo
- see the notes)

Directions:

Cook and mash the potatoes in whatever way that makes you happy. My only suggestion would be to make sure that in the end, they are nice and smooth. Put the potatoes into a Dutch oven or large skillet. Stir in the butter and cream with a wooden spoon over low heat until fully incorporated, about 5 minutes.

Add the cheese and keep stirring with a wooden spoon for 10 to 15 minutes. Yes, 10 to 15 minutes. I realize that sounds like a long time but the excess stirring really changes the consistency of the potatoes. What you are looking for is that the potatoes and cheese have fully mixed together and that the mixture becomes elastic. Test by pulling a spoonful up and out of the pot and it resembles molten cheese.

Notes:

What type of cheese should you use for pommes aligot? In Geraldene Holt's classic book on Southern French cooking 'French Country Kitchen', she mentions using a tomme from late spring or summer when the cows are grazing on the higher pastures. Since I am neither in France nor is it late spring, I used a raclette cheese. What you are looking for is something that is young and soft. Other than raclette I have used Gruyere, cheddar cheese curds, or Emmenthal.

