

Loaded Baked Potato Soup

Creamy Yukon Gold potatoes, crisp bacon, two kinds of cheddar—and jalapeños for anyone who likes a little plot twist.



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- **4 potatoes**, scrubbed and cubed (Yukon Gold preferred; russet or red work too)
- **8 slices bacon**
- **4 tbsp unsalted butter**
- **2 garlic cloves**, minced
- **¼ cup yellow onion**, diced
- **■ cup all-purpose flour**
- **2 cups heavy cream**
- **2 cups chicken stock**
- **1 tsp salt**, plus more to taste
- **½ tsp garlic salt**, plus more to taste
- **½ tsp black pepper**
- **1 cup mild cheddar**, freshly grated
- **1 cup sharp cheddar**, freshly grated
- **1 cup sour cream** (or plain Greek yogurt)
- Fresh chives, for serving
- Optional: sliced jalapeños or red pepper flakes

LET'S MAKE IT

- 1. Crisp the bacon.** Cook in a skillet over medium-high heat until crisp. Drain on paper towels, then crumble when cool. Reserve up to 1 tablespoon bacon fat; discard the rest.
- 2. Soften the aromatics.** In a large pot, melt butter over medium-low heat. Add reserved bacon fat, garlic, and onion. Cook 2–3 minutes, until onion softens.
- 3. Build the creamy base.** Whisk in flour and cook 1–2 minutes, stirring constantly. Gradually whisk in cream until smooth, then slowly add chicken stock.
- 4. Simmer the potatoes.** Stir in salt, garlic salt, pepper, and potatoes. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook 15–20 minutes, until potatoes are tender. Stir occasionally; avoid a hard boil.
- 5. Load it up.** Reserve a little cheese and bacon for topping, if desired. Stir remaining cheddar, bacon, and sour cream into the soup. Remove from heat.
- 6. Choose your texture.** Break up some potatoes with a spoon for a thicker soup, or leave them chunky. Stir in jalapeños or red pepper flakes to taste—or let everyone add their own heat.
- 7. Serve.** Ladle into bowls and finish with reserved cheese and bacon, fresh chives, and extra jalapeños. The toppings are not the time to practice restraint.

Grate your own cheddar if you can. It melts more smoothly, and the soup deserves that tiny upgrade. Plain Greek yogurt works in place of sour cream. Makes about 6 servings.