

# MILK STREET

## Butter-Braised Mashed Potatoes

Start to finish: 40 minutes

Servings: 6 to 8

The trouble with most mashed potatoes? They taste more of milk or cream than potatoes. And they often end up gluey. So this recipe skips the liquid dairy and instead simmers russets in a minimal amount of water that is cooked off, not drained. This ensures all the potato flavor stays in the pot. We also cook the potatoes in a generous amount of butter—18 tablespoons! As the fat melts, it coats the potatoes' starch molecules and prevents them from becoming gluey. We tested numerous potato varieties, but russets were our favorite. They do require a rinse before cooking to wash away excess starch, but they yield fluffy mashed potatoes that taste distinctly of, well, potatoes. And butter. This recipe gives instructions for serving the potatoes right away, as well as for making them in advance. Either way, the texture is best when the spuds are hot, so we recommend warming the serving bowl before filling it.

Don't use a small pot, nor a tall, narrow stockpot for this recipe. A Dutch oven with about a 7- to 8-quart capacity is best, as it provides enough surface area for the quantity of potatoes and allows for the correct rate of evaporation of moisture. Also, after the potatoes are mashed, don't stir in the water. Instead, mash with the potato masher until the liquid is incorporated; this ensures the consistency doesn't become gluey.

—The Milk Street Kitchen

3 pounds russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks

18 tablespoons salted butter, cut into chunks

Kosher salt and ground black pepper

Boiling water, if serving right away

Chopped chives, to serve

**Place the potatoes in a colander;** rinse briefly under cool water while tossing. Drain well, then transfer to a large (7- to 8-quart) Dutch oven; distribute evenly. Add 1½ cups water; the potatoes will not be fully submerged. Sprinkle with 1½ teaspoons salt, then drop in the chunks of butter.

**Bring to a boil over medium-high,** then cover, reduce to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes fall apart when poked with a fork, 25 to 30 minutes. Uncover and cook over medium, stirring only once or twice, until only a little starchy liquid remains in the bottom of the pot, 3 to 5 minutes. Off heat, use a potato masher to mash the potatoes until smooth.

**If serving right away,** add ½ cup boiling water and mash until the water is incorporated. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a warmed serving dish and sprinkle with chives

and additional pepper.

**If making ahead**, transfer to a container and cool completely, then cover tightly and refrigerate up to 2 days. To reheat, transfer the potatoes to a large saucepan and add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water. Cover and cook over medium-low, mashing occasionally (do not stir), until the potatoes are warm and fluffy, about 20 minutes; add more water a few tablespoons at a time as needed to adjust consistency. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a warmed serving dish and sprinkle with chives and additional pepper.