

Colcannon

What Is Colcannon? A Brief History of This Irish Staple

Colcannon is a mixture of cooked and shredded cabbage and mashed potatoes. The word colcannon is derived from the Gaelic term cal ceannann, which means "white-headed cabbage" — the vegetable most commonly mixed with potatoes in this dish.

It's often served alongside Irish meats, and is made by combining potatoes and greens (usually cabbage, but kale and other leafy greens are sometimes used). There are many variations of colcannon, as cooks would use whatever they had on hand. Traditionally, melted butter is poured into the center of the dish creating a "well" of butter.

It's no surprise these ingredients were combined to make this traditional dish: potatoes and cabbage were considered foods of the common people during the 17th and 18th centuries. So combining these ingredients made for a dish that was both affordable and accessible to most people in Ireland.

In fact, the dish became such a staple in Irish cuisine that there's even a children's song written about it. Here's an excerpt from the song, *The Auld Skillet Pot*:

Well, did you ever make colcannon made with lovely pickled cream
With the greens and scallions mingled like a picture in a dream
Did you ever make a hole on top to hold the 'melting' flake
Of the creamy flavoured butter that our mothers used to make

Active time: about 30 minutes Total time: about 30 minutes

Serves 4 to 6

2 to 2 1/2 pounds Yukon gold potatoes, cut in large chunks

Kosher salt

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided, room temperature, plus more for serving (optional)--substitute high quality vegan margarine during Lent

3 cups shredded savoy cabbage or lacinato kale leaves with ribs removed

4 scallions, sliced, white and green parts separated

3 cloves garlic, grated or minced

1 teaspoon dried mustard, such as Colman's (high quality premade mustard would likely be just fine)

1/2 cup whole milk--substitute plant milk with body--possibly cashew milk during Lent

1/2 cup chicken stock (or more milk)--substitute vegetable broth during Lent, boxed is quick & easy

1/2 cup packed finely grated sharp Irish cheddar cheese, or more to taste--substitute grated Violife brand vegan cheddar or Violife vegan parmesan "cheese," shredding or grating it for Lent

Non Lenten ingredient: crisped bacon bits to stir in

Freshly ground black pepper

Place the potatoes and 2 teaspoons salt in a pot and cover by 1 inch with cold water. Bring to a boil and cook until the potatoes are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Drain thoroughly, then return to the pot.

While the potatoes are cooking, heat 1 tablespoon butter in a large skillet. Add the cabbage or kale and the white parts of the scallions. Sauté until the greens wilt, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the garlic and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds more. Remove from the heat.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons butter and the mustard to the drained potatoes and mash with a fork or potato masher. Stir in the milk and stock, then stir in the greens, and the cheese (if using). Season with salt and a generous grind of black pepper. For non-fasting, add bacon bits. Top with scallions.

Source: All Recipes & The Epoch Times