

BAKED POTATO BAR

BAKED POTATOES - BASIC RECIPE

4 medium baking potatoes: prick well-scrubbed potatoes several times with fork tines. Arrange 1 inch apart on paper towel on oven floor. Microwave at HIGH 10 to 12 minutes, turning over and rearranging after 5-6 minutes. Potatoes will feel slightly firm. Wrap in foil; let stand 5 to 10 minutes to complete cooking.

In the meantime, prepare a variety of toppings for the potatoes. These could include: sour cream, butter or margarine, chives, bacon bits, shredded cheddar cheese, diced ham, parsley, sliced olives, spiced cheese sauce, mushrooms, gravy sauces with mushrooms or ground beef, etc. OR use any of the following topping variations.

TOPPING VARIATIONS

PIZZA POTATO TOPPER

4 medium baking potatoes
1/4 lb. ground beef
1 small onion, chopped
1/4 c. chopped green pepper
1/2 large tomato, chopped
2 Tbsp. catsup

Dash black pepper
1/4 tsp. oregano
1/4 tsp. basil
1/2 tsp. salt, optional
1/2 c. shredded low fat
mozzarella cheese

Bake potatoes. In 2 qt. casserole combine crumbled ground beef, onion and green pepper. Microwave at HIGH 3-4 minutes, stirring twice **OR** saute until beef is no longer pink. Drain fat. Stir in tomato, catsup and seasonings. Remove potatoes from foil. Split each in half lengthwise. Place on roasting rack. Lift and flake potato centers with fork. Spoon meat mixture over potatoes. Top with mozzarella cheese. Microwave at HIGH for 1 to 2 minutes or until cheese melts **OR** place in hot oven for 5 to 10 minutes or until cheese melts.

CURRIED CHICKEN POTATO TOPPER

4 medium baking potatoes	1/4 cup hot water
1/4 c. chopped green pepper	3/4 c. skim milk
1/2 c. chopped celery	1 Tbsp. white wine (optional)
1/4 c. chopped green onion	1 tsp. curry powder
1/4 c. shredded carrot	1/4 tsp. poultry seasoning
8 oz. sliced fresh mushrooms	1/4 tsp. salt (optional)
1/2 tsp. instant chicken bouillon granules	2 c. cooked chicken, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour	Fresh snipped parsley

Bake potatoes. In 2 qt. casserole combine green pepper, celery, onion, carrot and mushrooms; cover. Microwave at **HIGH** 3 to 6 minutes or until vegetables are tender-crisp **OR** saute until tender. Drain liquid.

In medium bowl combine bouillon, flour and water. Blend in milk. Microwave at **HIGH** 2-5 minutes, or until slightly thickened, stirring after every minute. Stir in wine and seasonings. Add sauce and chicken to vegetables. Microwave at **HIGH** 2 to 4 minutes, or until hot. Halve each baked potato lengthwise and flake center. Spoon topping over potatoes. Garnish with fresh parsley. **NOTE:** This sauce can be cooked on a range top if no microwave is available.

BEEF & MUSHROOM POTATO TOPPER

4 medium baking potatoes	1/4 c. tomato juice
1/2 lb. lean ground beef	2 Tbsp. white wine (optional)
1 medium onion, sliced and separated with rings	1 Tbsp. cornstarch
8 oz. sliced fresh mushrooms	1/2 tsp. salt (optional)
1 clove garlic, minced	1/4 tsp. dry mustard
1/4 c. skim milk	1/8 tsp. pepper
	fresh snipped parsley

Bake potatoes. In a 2 qt. casserole combine ground beef, onion, mushrooms and garlic; cover. Microwave at **HIGH** 3 to 6 minutes, stirring twice **OR** saute until beef is no longer pink. Drain.

Combine remaining ingredients except parsley. Stir into meat mixture. Microwave at **HIGH** 4-6 minutes, or until thickened, stirring twice **OR** this sauce can be cooked on a range top if no microwave is available.

Halve each baked potato lengthwise and flake centers. Spoon topping over potatoes. Garnish with parsley.

CHEESY TURKEY POTATO TOPPER

4 medium baking potatoes	1/4 tsp. dry mustard
1 pkg. (8 oz.) frozen chopped broccoli	1/8 tsp. paprika
1 cup cooked turkey, cut into 1/4 inch cubes	4 tsp. all purpose flour
1 tsp. instant chicken bouillon granules	3/4 c. skim milk
	2 slices low fat American cheese, each slice cut into 8 strips
	Pimento slices

Bake potatoes. Microwave broccoli in package at HIGH 3 to 4 minutes, or until warm, turning once. Drain broccoli well. Place in 2 qt. casserole. Stir in turkey. Set aside.

In medium bowl combine bouillon, onion, mustard, paprika and flour. Add milk slowly, using wire whip to eliminate lumps. Microwave at HIGH 3 to 4 minutes, or until thickened, stirring several times. Combine milk mixture with turkey and broccoli.

Halve each baked potato lengthwise and flake centers. Spoon one-fourth of topping over each potato, then top each with 4 strips of cheese. Garnish with pimento slices. Microwave potatoes at HIGH 30 to 60 seconds, or until cheese melts.

NOTE: This recipe can be prepared on a range top if no microwave is not available.