

Schmaltz Potato Latkes*Serves 6*

4 large Idaho russet potatoes, scrubbed
 1 large onion
 ¼ teaspoon baking powder
 2 large eggs, beaten
 3 tablespoons bread crumbs
 1 tablespoon schmaltz (rendered chicken fat; duck fat or vegetable oil is a fine substitute)
 1 tablespoon baking powder
 2 teaspoons kosher salt
 Vegetable oil, for frying

1. Preheat your oven to 200°F and set a wire rack over a baking sheet.
2. Using a food processor with a shredding attachment or a box grater, shred the potatoes and onion. Gather half the shredded mixture in a clean kitchen towel. Twist the ends of the towel and ring out the water from the mixture over a bowl—the harder you squeeze the better. Place the now-dry potato mixture into a big bowl and repeat the process with what's left.
3. The bowl catching all the potato and onion liquid should look brown and foggy. On the bottom of the bowl is the starch of the potato. Carefully pour away the liquid, leaving the white potato starch on the bottom of the bowl. Get all that paste and add it to the bowl with the shredded potatoes.
4. Add the eggs, breadcrumbs, schmaltz, baking powder and salt to the shredded potatoes and starch. Using your hands mix everything until it forms a coherent mass. Because of the potato starch and the breadcrumbs—you do not want to over mix or you might get a tough latke. Set aside. (Do not let your latke mixture sit any longer than 1 hour, or else the potatoes will start to release more water and you will have soggy latkes.)
5. Heat a medium sauté pan with straight sides over medium high heat and add enough vegetable oil to come one third of the way up the pan. After about five minutes, grab a bit of the latke mixture and carefully drop it in the hot oil—the oil should be vigorously bubbling when it comes in contact with the batter.
6. To form your latkes, scoop up the potato mixture in 1/3-cup amounts and shape into a flat pancake the size of your hand, about 3/4 –inch thick. Add the latkes to the hot oil in the pan, working four latkes at a time—DO NOT flatten the disk once in the pan. After 4 minutes, flip the latke and cooked for about another 3 minutes on the other side. Once golden brown carefully remove the latke to the wire rack and season with salt, then continue with the remaining latke batter. If not eating right away place all the latkes in the oven for up to 30 minutes, to keep warm. If enjoying right away, serve warm with applesauce and sour cream.

Recipe courtesy of Sur La Table Chef Joel Gamoran

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