

ON THE SIDE Lemon Potatoes

Creamy and bright, these Greek-inspired potatoes deserve wider play in American kitchens. BY LYNN CLARK

AT MODEST GREEK RESTAURANTS in American cities, we've often enjoyed lemony, garlicky, golden potatoes—a tasty cross between home fries and roasted potatoes. Many recipes call for covering potato wedges with a mixture of olive oil and equal parts water and lemon juice, baking them in a slow oven for up to 1½ hours, then crisping the wedges on a hot griddle. The method makes sense at a restaurant where the potatoes are finished to order, but was time-consuming and somewhat laborious at home. Could I streamline it?

I tried skipping the crisping step, baking the potatoes until the liquid evaporated. High marks for ease, low marks for soggy texture. Next, I sautéed the potatoes in a skillet, then dressed them with lemon juice. Great color, scant lemon flavor. To combine the best facets of each, I skillet-simmered the potatoes in the liquid, covered, until tender, and then uncovered the pan to let the liquid evaporate. Once the pan was dry, I added a little oil to brown the potatoes. The potatoes fell apart.

I'd been using medium-starch Yukon gold potatoes. To eliminate the mushy potato problem, I tried waxy red potatoes. To eliminate the crumbling problem, I cut them in half instead of in wedges. The potatoes stayed intact, but the starch still burned slightly. A classic French fry prep technique—rinsing the raw potatoes to wash off the starch—solved the problem.

For the simmering liquid, a 1:1 ratio of water to

lemon juice proved too puckery. After several tests, I went with 1 cup of water to just 2 tablespoons of lemon juice, plus a little grated zest. For added richness, I replaced the water with chicken broth and tossed in two cloves of garlic.

LEMON POTATOES Serves 4

- 2 pounds baby red potatoes, scrubbed and halved (quartered if large)
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed, plus 2 cloves, minced
- 1½ teaspoons grated zest and 2 tablespoons juice from 1 lemon
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley

1. RINSE POTATOES Place potatoes in colander set over large bowl. Rinse under running water, tossing with hands until water runs clear. Drain potatoes well.

2. COOK POTATOES Bring potatoes, smashed garlic, lemon juice, chicken broth, and ½ teaspoon salt to boil in large nonstick skillet. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, covered, until potatoes are just tender, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove lid and increase heat



We finished the potatoes with garlic, parsley, and lemon z

to medium. Cook, stirring occasionally, until liquid evaporates, about 5 minutes.

3. CRISP POTATOES Discard garlic cloves and add to pan. Turn all potatoes cut-side down and continue cook until deep golden brown, about 6 minutes. Off heat, stir in parsley, lemon zest, and minced garlic. Season with salt and pepper. Serve.