

POTATOES AU GRATIN

SERVES 4 TO 6 AS A SIDE DISH

THIS IS A RECIPE WE CREATED FOR BEECHER'S. Although it was popular, it didn't keep well in the store format so we stopped selling it, much to the disappointment of our loyal customers. We get asked for the recipe for this classic cheesy potato dish all the time, so here it is.

2 tablespoons unsalted butter	8 ounces semihard cheese (page 23), grated (2 cups)
2½ tablespoons all-purpose flour	1 ounce semisoft cheese (page 23), grated (¼ cup)
1½ cups milk	¼ teaspoon chipotle chili powder
½ teaspoon kosher salt	⅛ teaspoon garlic powder
2 large russet potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced (about 2 pounds)	¼ cup fresh bread crumbs

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter an 8-inch baking dish.

Heat a medium saucepan over medium heat and melt the butter. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute. Add 1 cup of the milk and stir until smooth. Add the remaining ½ cup milk and the salt. Add the potatoes to the milk mixture, stirring to coat. Cook the potatoes, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes. The potatoes should still be firm. (They will finish baking in the oven.) Remove from the heat.

Stir in 1¾ cups of the semihard cheese along with the semisoft cheese, chipotle powder, and garlic powder. Pour the potato mixture into the baking dish, spreading it evenly. Top with the reserved ¼ cup semihard cheese and the bread crumbs.

Bake for about 45 minutes, or until the top is golden brown, the sauce is bubbly, and the potatoes in the center of the dish are tender when pierced with a fork.

Let the gratin cool for 5 minutes before serving.

MAKE AHEAD To make the gratin up to 1 day in advance, prepare it to the point of baking, cover, and refrigerate. Bake for about 1 hour. Reheat leftover gratin in a preheated 350°F oven, covered with foil.