

CHEESY BAKED POTATO SOUP



Ingredients:

- ½ pound of smoked bacon, chopped (reserve some for garnish)
- 1 large Vidalia onion, diced
- 1 rib celery, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 quart vegetable or chicken broth
- 6 large Russet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 ½ cups light cream
- 8 ounces sour cream
- 12 ounces extra sharp cheddar cheese, freshly grated
- Kosher salt, to taste
- White pepper, to taste

Directions:

Heat a large pot on the stove over medium heat. Add all the bacon strips to the pot and cook until crisp. Remove the bacon from the pot and place on a plate lined with paper towels. Drain the bacon grease from the pot, and place the pot back on the stove over medium heat.

Add the onion and celery, cooking until tender, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle the flour over the onions and celery and cook, stirring constantly, for about one minute.

Slowly add in the broth, whisking constantly, until smooth.

Add the potatoes and bring to a boil. Let simmer until the potatoes are softened, about 20 minutes. Using a potato masher, crush the softened potatoes so that the starches release to slightly thicken the soup.

Stir in the light cream, sour cream, and grated cheese, simmering until the cheese is melted and the soup is hot, about 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper, ladle into soup bowls, and garnish with your choice of toppings — cheese, scallions, bacon, jalapeños, and sour cream.

Garnishes:

Grated cheddar cheese, diced scallions, crumbled bacon, minced jalapeños, sour cream

Makes 6 Servings