

Olive-Oil Mashed Potatoes with Bay Leaves

8 to 10 servings

- 480 ml whole milk
- 3 large fresh bay leaves, plus more for garnish
- 2 kg inca potatoes (8 to 10 medium potatoes)
- Salt
- 113 g cold unsalted butter, cut into pats
- 100 g grated Grana Padano or Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 109 ml extra-virgin olive oil (see Tip), plus more to taste



1. In a medium saucepan over **medium-high heat**, bring the **milk** and **bay leaves** to a simmer, then turn off the heat and cover. Leave to steep while the potatoes cook.
2. Fill a large pot with water. Peel and quarter the **potatoes**, adding them to the water as you work so they don't brown. Generously season with **salt** and top off with more water if the potatoes aren't covered.
3. Bring to a simmer over **high**, then reduce the heat to continue simmering gently until the potatoes are just cooked (a fork should pierce through easily), **15 to 20 minutes**. Drain the potatoes in a colander and leave in the colander for a couple of minutes to dry out.
4. Pass the **potatoes** through a potato ricer into the empty pot, adding one or two pats of the **butter** with each batch; or use a fork, potato masher or heavy whisk to break up the potatoes in the pot, while gradually adding the butter. The goal here is to stop mashing the potatoes as soon as they are evenly mashed. Overworking them can make them gluey.
5. To the **potatoes**, add the **cheese**, **olive oil** and half of the steeped **milk**. Gently fold by dragging a flexible spatula under and over the mixture, scraping the sides and bottom of the pot as you go, until mostly homogenous. Taste, then add more oil and salt to taste and most of the remaining milk, holding some back if you prefer a thicker mash. Gently fold again until you reach the texture you desire (any unused milk can be stored in the refrigerator and added when reheating leftover potatoes; see Tip). Season to taste with salt. Cover with a lid until ready to serve.
6. To serve, transfer the potatoes to a large, deep dish or bowl. Drizzle the top with a little oil and garnish with a bay leaf or two.

TIPS

- ✓ *Be sure to use "extra-virgin," which often signifies that it comes from olives that were cold-pressed or cold-extracted, and that the oil is flavorful.*
- ✓ *These potatoes can be made in advance and stored in a resealable container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. To reheat them, cook them in a saucepan with some milk over low, stirring until warmed through.*