RECIPE

Potato Latkes

A winter side of crisp potato pancakes pan-fried in a little oil.

MAKES

4 servings (12 latkes)

US | Metric

TOTAL

45 min

Ingredients

- [ ] 1 ½ lb russet potatoes, peeled (about 3 medium)
- [ ] 1 medium onion, peeled
- [ ] 1 large egg
- [ ] 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- [ ] ¾ tsp salt
- [ ] ¼ tsp black pepper
- [ ] ½ cup olive oil, about ¼ inch deep in a 12-inch skillet
- [ ] Paper towels for draining

Method

1. Set a wire rack on a sheet pan and heat the oven to 250 °F. This keeps the first latkes warm.

2. Grate the onion first, then the potatoes, using the coarse side of a box grater. The onion keeps the potato from turning gray.

3. Put the gratings in a clean dish towel, twist it hard over the sink, and squeeze out all the liquid. Squeeze until only a few drops come out. Wet potato makes a soggy latke.

4. In a big bowl, beat the egg with the flour, salt and pepper. The salt is measured, ¾ tsp for the whole batch, and it is the only salt in the recipe. Add the potato and onion and mix with a fork.

5. Pour the oil into a 12-inch heavy skillet, about ¼ inch deep, and heat it over medium-high until it shimmers. This is a shallow pan-fry, never a deep fryer. Stay at the pan the whole time, keep the heat steady, and keep a pot lid within reach. If the oil smokes, turn off the heat. If it ever flares, slide the lid over the pan and leave it. Never throw water on hot oil.

6. Scoop a heaping 2 tablespoons of the mix for each latke, set it in the oil and press it flat with a spatula to about ½ inch. Fit 4 to 5 in the pan with space between.

7. Fry 4 to 5 minutes, until the edges are deep golden, then flip and fry 3 to 4 minutes more. The center should be cooked through and hot, at least 160 °F, because there is egg in it.

8. Drain on paper towels and move to the rack in the oven. Wipe stray bits from the pan between batches and add a spoonful of oil if the pan looks dry. Makes 12. Serve as a side, beside a vegetable or bean main.