

2 Timers – Baked Potatoes

Courtesy of Carole's Creations

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 1 to 1-1/2 hours

Serves: 4 (2 halves per person)

CChints: Baked potato nails can be inserted through the middle of each potato. They will transfer heat to the middle of the potato and shorten the baking time. They are not required but come in handy when you are working with large potatoes.



4 large russet potatoes, well scrubbed

Optional – 3 bake potato nails

1/2 cup reduced fat sour cream

4 tablespoons butter, softened

3 ounce jar of Bacon bits

3/4 cup smoked gouda cheese, shredded and divided

3/4 cup cheddar cheese, shredded and divided

Garnish – 2 green onions, sliced thin or 3 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped

Optional – extra butter on top of each potato just before serving

Position your oven rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 400 degrees F. While you are waiting on the oven to warm up you can start your prep work.

Scrub and dry each potato. If you are using the baking nails, insert one in the center of each potato. If you are not using the nails, just put the potatoes on the center rack of the oven and bake for 1 hour.

During this hour you can do the rest of the prep work. In a large bowl, combine the sour cream through salt and pepper. Stir in 3/4 of the bacon pieces and 1/2 cup of each cheese. Set the bowl aside until the potatoes have baked.

When they have baked for the hour, carefully remove them from the oven and lay them on your cutting/work surface. With an oven mitt on one hand and a small sharp knife in the other, cut each potato in half, lengthwise and lay open faced on your work surface.

For the next step you can use the same knife or a sharp grapefruit spoon and a baking sheet. Cut or scoop out the center of each, leaving a one half inch wall to the potato skin. The portion you take out should be put into the large mixing bowl with the sour cream mixture and the potato put on the baking sheet. When you have finished all of the potatoes, stir the ingredients in the mixing bowl together. One at a time, spoon the mixture back into the potatoes. Try to make them look as even as possible. Sprinkle each with the remaining cheese and bacon bits. Bake for another 15 minutes or until the potatoes are completely done and the cheese has melted.

Carefully remove them from the oven and transfer them to a serving platter. Sprinkle with optional green onions or chives and top with a small piece of butter.