

Goat Cheese Gratin

Carissa Giacalone, chef/caterer in San Diego
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A delish side dish, like scalloped potatoes but much, much better.

ONIONS:

- 2 medium onions, thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons garlic, minced
- Kosher salt and pepper, to taste

POTATOES:

- 8 medium russet potatoes, sliced 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick
- 10 ounces goat cheese, crumbled

CRUST:

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup panko, or fresh bread crumbs

BÉCHAMEL SAUCE:

- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 5 tablespoons flour
- 4 cups whole milk, heated
- 1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg, freshly ground
- Kosher salt and pepper to taste

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons
<http://tastingspoons.com>

Servings: 8

The crumb topping adds a super crust - don't eliminate this step. Be careful not to overseason with salt and pepper, but you do want it on every layer, and in the sauce.

- 1. ONIONS:** Place a large skillet over medium heat until warm, then add the butter. Once heated, add onions and sugar. Cook, stirring frequently until very well caramelized and soft/golden, approximately 30-35 minutes. Add the minced garlic and cook an additional 2 minutes. Season lightly with salt and pepper and reserve.
- 2. POTATOES:** Peel and slice the potatoes (use a mandoline if possible so you'll get a uniform thickness) and place in a large stockpot. Cover with cold water, add salt, place over medium-high heat and parboil until crisp tender, about 5-7 minutes, depending on thickness of slices. Potatoes should be HALFWAY cooked at this point. Drain potatoes in a large colander.
- 3.** Preheat oven to 350.
- 4. BÉCHAMEL:** In a medium saucepan heat the butter over medium-low heat until melted. Add flour and stir until smooth. Cook the mixture over medium heat until it turns a light golden sandy color, approximately 6-7 minutes. Stir often so it doesn't burn. Slowly add the hot milk, one cup at a time, whisking continuously until very smooth. Bring to a boil and cook for 8-10 minutes, stirring frequently, until mixture has thickened. Season with freshly grated nutmeg, salt, pepper and set aside.
- 5. CASSEROLE:** Grease the bottom and sides of a 8 1/2 x 10 inch baking dish with one tablespoon of butter. Arrange about a quarter of the potatoes, overlapping, on the bottom. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add a quarter of the onions, a layer of cheese, béchamel sauce and seasonings, and continue forming layers almost up to the top rim.
- 6. CRUST:** Melt remaining 2 T. of butter and add bread crumbs (panko) to form a crumbly topping. Sprinkle over the top. Place on a rimmed cookie sheet lined with foil and bake for 30-35 minutes or until the mixture is bubbly and browned and potatoes are soft and tender. Remove from oven and rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 460 Calories; 31g Fat (59.3% calories from fat); 18g Protein; 30g Carbohydrate; 2g Dietary Fiber; 91mg Cholesterol; 197mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 1/2 Grain(Starch); 1 1/2 Lean Meat; 1/2 Vegetable; 1/2 Non-Fat Milk; 5 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.