Potatoes Dauphinoise

Make-ahead · Serves a crowd · Serves 6–8

Ken's note: TBD

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp unsalted butter, for the skillet, plus 2 Tbsp, diced, for the top
- 1 garlic clove, halved, plus 4–6 cloves, minced, and 2 smashed
- 1½ cups heavy cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 bay leaf
- 2½–3 lb Yukon Gold potatoes, sliced ⅛ inch thick
- Fresh thyme leaves (optional)
- A little freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 cup grated Gruyère (optional, but good)
- Black or white pepper
- Salt

Method

1. Heat the cream, milk, smashed garlic, and bay leaf until steaming; take it off the heat and let it steep. Heat the oven to 375°F. Rub a 10- or 12-inch cast-iron skillet with the halved garlic and butter it well.
2. Layer the potatoes in the skillet, scattering minced garlic, thyme, nutmeg, and pepper as you go. Strain the cream over the potatoes (or leave the aromatics in) so it comes about three-quarters of the way up. Press the potatoes down so they’re mostly submerged.
3. Bring the skillet to a gentle simmer on the stove, then bake uncovered until the potatoes are tender and the top is golden, 45–60 minutes. Add the Gruyère for the last 15 minutes, and dot with the remaining butter. Rest 10–15 minutes before serving. The cheese and the reduced cream are already salty; taste a bite from the edge and salt only if it needs it.