

Baked Patatas Bravas | Spanish Potatoes

Swick

Serves 4 to 6 | Active Time: 40 minutes | Total Time: 2 hours

- 2 lbs russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1" cubes (approx. 4 to 5 potatoes)
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp sea salt

To start the potatoes, first, bring 8 cups of water to a boil. Once boiling, add the baking soda, followed by the diced potatoes.

As soon as the water comes back up to a boil, set a timer for 2 minutes. Once the timer goes off, drain the potatoes and then return them to the dry pot. Add the salt to the potatoes and stir, with the heat on low, for a minute or so to dry out the potatoes — ensuring they are dry will help them to crisp up nicely later. After a minute or so, turn off the heat and then place a lid over the pot and with the lid secure, vigorously shake the potatoes a few times. This helps to rough up the outside of the potatoes, which will also help them to crispy up later.

Once done, spread the potatoes out onto a baking sheet and let cool for an hour or so.

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp minced garlic
- 2 chiles de árbol, broken up*
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 3/4 cup quality canned tomatoes (such as San Marzano), crushed
- 1 tbsp sweetener
- 1 1/4 tsp sweet smoked paprika
- 1/4 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- 1/8 tsp cayenne, or to taste
- water, as needed
- 1/4 cup plant-based mayonnaise*

To start the sauce, heat a small pot over medium heat and add the oil, garlic and chiles de árbol and let cook for a minute or so, or until fragrant — stirring frequently. Note: Chiles de árbol are similar in flavor and spice level to cayenne pepper, but they have a brighter, more nutty flavor. With that said, if you don't have them you can substitute with cayenne powder — starting with 1/4 tsp increments.

Next, add the tomato paste and sherry vinegar and cook for another minute or so, or until the vinegar has evaporated. Next, add the tomatoes and sugar and reduce the heat to low.

Let this mixture cook for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the flavors have nicely come together.

Lastly, add paprika and salt and taste for seasoning. If needed, add the cayenne and a bit more salt. Note that this sauce is meant to be spicy, so don't be afraid of the heat. With that being said, the amount of heat you add is up to you.

To purée the sauce, add it to a high-speed blender and blend with 2 tablespoons of water. If the mixture still seems too thick, add a tablespoon or 2 more of water.

In the end, you are looking for a thick almost ketchup-like consistency.

To serve the sauce, it can be served as-is or it can be mixed with a bit of mayonnaise. Alternatively, the mayonnaise can be made into an aioli and served on the side. To do this, simply add a touch of minced garlic to the mayonnaise. For ease, we typically just add the mayonnaise to the tomato sauce.

This sauce can be made well in advance and kept in an airtight container in the refrigerator for a week or more. It can even be frozen. If making ahead, it is best to leave the mayonnaise out and add it just before finishing the dish.

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- sea salt, for roasting
- finishing salt, for serving (such as Maldon or Fleur de sel)

To roast the potatoes, preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C). Once hot, toss the potatoes with the oil and salt and then spread them out onto a baking tray that has been lined with aluminum foil and coated (or sprayed) with a bit of oil and then place the tray into the oven.

Roast the potatoes for approximately 15 to 20 minutes, or until the bottom of the potatoes has turned a deep golden brown color. At this point, remove the potatoes from the oven and turn the heat up to 475°F (245°C). Very carefully toss the potatoes, trying to not tear the aluminum foil. If needed, use a flat spatula to help release the potatoes from the aluminum foil. Place the potatoes back into the oven and continue to roast for another 10 to 15 minutes, or until they are nice and golden and cooked through. The time will ultimately depend on your oven, the potatoes, etc.

Once done, remove the potatoes from the oven and sprinkle with a bit of finishing salt.

Transfer the potatoes to a serving platter and serve with the tomato sauce. The sauce(s) can either be drizzled over top or served on the side. Some recipes say to toss the potatoes in the sauce but this immediately softens the nice crispy potatoes (believe us, we tried it), so we prefer to serve the sauce over top on the side.

Chef's Note

The sauce does not necessarily have to be puréed. We prefer it that way as the nice smooth contrast is great against the crispy potatoes but that's up to you. If leaving the sauce as is, skip toasting the chiles — instead, soak them and then finely chop them up before starting the dish — just so you don't have big chunks of chiles in the final sauce.

Also, one more thing to note here, many people ask “what if I don't have this, or that?” and generally, substitutions are totally fine but there is something really special that the sherry vinegar adds to the sauce, so do try to use it. It's actually a great vinegar to have in your pantry anyway as it adds a lovely bright and unique flavor to many dressings and dishes.

Pan Con Tomate

Marinated Carrots

Braised Spinach & Chickpea

Smoky Spanish Almonds

Charred Roasted Red Peppers

Tortilla da Patatas

Charred Shisito/Padrón Peppers