

Hachis Parmentier

1 lb ground beef

-I usually do 1/2 ground beef and 1/2 sausage (for example a medium Italian pork sausage, out of the casing; or do 3/4 ground beef and 1/4 sausage; you can do all beef, but the sausage adds another note and spices)

1 large onion, chopped

2-3 cloves garlic, chopped

3 tomatoes, chopped

1 hard boiled egg (or add uncooked egg yolk to the meat at the end)

1 tbs flour (optional)

1 tsp Herbes de Provence, or whatever herbs you like

1 tsp salt — when it is cooked, before assembling, taste to see if it needs more

Grated gruyère or parmesan (or both)

Chopped parsley (optional)

For the purée

1.5 to 2 lbs potatoes, peeled and cut in same size for uniform cooking (yellow—Yukon gold—or white—Russet—or a combination)

3-6 oz butter (I start with 3 oz, and taste to see if it needs more)

1 to 1.5 cups whole milk, warm (start with a cup and add more as needed)

-You can warm your milk with a bay leaf, a clove of garlic, some salt and your butter (or add you butter cold to the warm potatoes)
salt

Sauté your onions for about 5-10 minutes, then add garlic, tomatoes, meats, herbs, salt. Stir and let everything simmer and come together. After about 10 minutes, add the flour and stir. You can add the egg yolk here or the chopped hard boiled egg. My mother always added chopped parsley here, mostly for color. Taste for salt and turn it off.

Meanwhile, put your potatoes in cold, salted water and boil gently for 15-20 minutes. If you are doing a hard boiled egg, you can cook it with the potatoes.

When the potatoes are cooked, drain them in a colander and return them to the pot for a few minutes. I usually turn the burner back on for a minute. This helps dry your potatoes, and helps them absorb the milk/butter.

Put your potatoes into a ricer or Moulinex-type food mill. You can also just mash them. Add butter either directly to the potatoes or let it melt in your warm milk. Add the milk (start with one cup, then add rest as needed) to the potatoes and stir it in. Taste for seasoning.

Your Parmentier is essentially done. To assemble it, layer the bottom of your gratin dish or individual ramekin with the meat. Cover with a generous amount of purée. You can dot the purée with small pieces of butter and/or grated cheese. Bake it at 400 degrees for 15-20 minutes, until the purée starts to turn golden.

This is an easy recipe to make ahead of time, refrigerate and bake before serving. Just increase the cooking time for proper reheating as needed.