

Potato Latkes

Adapted from *Joan Nathan, Jewish Cooking in America*

Makes about 2 dozen:

Ingredients

1 1/2 pounds russet potatoes
1 pound yukon gold potatoes
1 large sweet onion
1 large egg
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 small bunch scallions, trimmed

canola oil, for frying
applesauce, as an accompaniment

Preparation

Peel and grate potatoes, either by hand, or with a food processor.
Place grated potatoes into a strainer over a large bowl.
Allow to drain for several minutes, periodically squeezing liquid out of potatoes by hand.
Grate onion and mix in with potatoes in strainer.

When liquid has settled in bowl, pour off water on top, leaving potato starch behind.
Add potatoes and onion to bowl and mix in with starch.
Add beaten egg, season with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper and toss until well combined.
Finely chop scallions, including a couple inches of the green part, and stir into the potato mixture.

Use two cast iron pans or skillets and heat well over medium high heat.
Add a thick coating of canola oil to each pan and heat until shimmering.

Form a pancake in your hands, pressing down to flatten it and remove any excess liquid.
Place in the pan to fry.
Continue making pancakes and fry them in batches, being careful not to crowd the pans as you go.

When latkes are golden on one side, flip over and continue to cook, about 4 or 5 minutes on each side.
Adjust heat as necessary to make sure they're cooking evenly.
As the pancakes absorb oil, you may need to add more oil to the pan.

Fit a baking sheet with a cooling rack and cover with a liner of paper towels.

As latkes cook, place them on rack to cool.

After the latkes have drained, serve them hot with lots of homemade applesauce.

To make latkes in advance, cool them after cooking and then refrigerate (you can freeze them too).

Bring pancakes to room temperature, then place on rack inside baking sheet.

Gently warm them through in a 350 degree oven before serving.

Of course, if you want to take them to another level...

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Zucchini Latkes with Smoked Trout, Creme Fraiche & Red Pepper Jelly

Adapted from *Rachel Klein, Food & Wine*

Makes about 4 dozen, 1 1/2 inch latkes:

Ingredients

1 pound zucchini, trimmed

Potato Latke mixture (omit scallions)

canola oil, for frying

4 ounces smoked trout

1/2 cup crème fraiche

1/2 cup red pepper, or hot pepper, jelly

thinly sliced scallion greens, for garnish

Preparation

Prep zucchini: if zucchini is very pulpy, remove seeds from center before grating them.

Mix together grated potatoes with onion, starch, egg, and seasonings, according to Potato Latke recipe.

Add grated zucchini and combine well with with potato mixture.

Form pancakes: for hors d'oeuvres, make smaller, bite-sized pancakes, 1 1/2 inches in diameter.

Cook zucchini latkes in the same manner as potato latkes: pan fry and drain on a rack.

Cooking time will be slightly reduced for smaller latkes, about 2 to 3 minutes per side.

By hand, flake the fillet of smoked trout, removing its skin and making sure to remove any pin bones.

To assemble latkes, place a dollop of crème fraiche on top of each pancake.

Place a chunk or two of trout on top of each latke.

Top each pancake with a tiny smidgen of red pepper or hot pepper jelly.

Garnish with thinly sliced scallion greens and serve immediately.

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