



Uptown Mashed Potatoes and Green Beans

Looks like a little garden from one of Monet's paintings

- 1-pound Yukon gold potatoes, washed, peeled
- 5 to 6 ounces tender string beans, washed, trimmed
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup minced onions
- 3-1/2 to 4 cups cold water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon salt or to taste
- 1 Tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper or to taste
- 1 to 2 slices bacon
- 1 bunch fresh oregano, leaves removed, stems discarded
- 1 bunch fresh thyme, leaves remove
- 1 small bunch fresh chives, minced
- Fresh tiny edible flowers or petals if desired

Prepare Potatoes and String Beans: Chop peeled potatoes into small chunks; cut trimmed string beans into ½ to 1-inch pieces. Set aside.

Cook Potatoes and String Beans: In hot 6 cup pot; add oil; then onions, cook several minutes to sweat or soften onions but don't brown. Add small potato chunks, string beans, and cover with about 3-1/2 cups water with salt; bring to a boil; partially cover pot; reduce heat to medium; cook; for about 15 to 20 minutes or until potatoes and beans are tender. Drain off water completely.

Prepare Potatoes and String Beans: Mash potatoes and string beans until creamy potatoes and small pieces of string beans are visible. Add butter; season with salt and black pepper to taste. Set aside to stay warm.

Cook Bacon: In small skillet, fry bacon until crisp; remove from pan; cool; cut into small pieces. Set aside bacon pieces and warm bacon drippings.

Prepare Herb Topping. Remove small leaves from oregano and thyme; combine in small bowl; add minced chives, minced bacon, and tiny edible flower buds or petals.

For Each Serving: Spread about 3/4 cup warm potato/string bean mixture into bottom of 5-inch round ceramic tart or quiche dish; brush potatoes lightly with reserved bacon drippings; sprinkle top of potatoes with reserved herb mixture covering the top. Serve warm. Yield: 3 servings

About the Recipe: Green string beans and potatoes served with a touch of butter are a perfect side dish. Just mash the string beans and golden potatoes together and tuck them inside individual mini quiche dishes. They are lightly brushed with bacon drippings and topped with tiny herb leaves, minced bacon, and a few tiny fresh flower buds or petals. What a beautiful way to serve those comforting mashed potatoes and garden-fresh green beans!