Potato Half-Shells with Three Cold Toppings

12 small potato half-shells, each filled at the table; 1 half plus one-twelfth of all toppings per side portion | Active 45 min | Cook 50 min | Total 175 min (cold service and transport) | Cold-travel planning: 175 min; follow the stated cooling endpoint and finishing route.

Ingredients

- 6 similar potatoes, about 7 oz/200 g each, 2 2/3 lb/1.2 kg total, scrubbed
- 2 tbsp (30 ml/28 g) olive oil, divided: 1 tbsp on potatoes and 1 tbsp in relish
- 1/2 tsp (3 g) fine salt, divided equally between potatoes and relish
- 1 can white beans, drained and rinsed to give 8 1/2 oz (240 g)
- 1 large firm tomato, seeded and finely diced, 150 g prepared weight
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice, divided equally between relish and yogurt
- 2 tbsp (10 g) chopped parsley
- 1/2 cup (120 g) plain yogurt made with pasteurized milk
- 4 1/4 oz (120 g) cheddar, coarsely grated
- 1 small crisp apple, cored and finely diced, 120 g prepared weight
- 1 scallion, finely sliced, 15 g prepared weight
- 1/4 tsp (0.5 g) black pepper

Set out

Oven, Large rimmed baking sheet, Knife, Tablespoon measure, Three mixing bowls with lids, Shallow cooling tray, Cooler with ice packs, Three separate clean serving spoons, Food thermometer for checking cold transport

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Cut each potato lengthways in half. Rub with 1 tbsp oil and 1/4 tsp salt. Arrange cut sides down on the sheet and roast 40-50 minutes until completely tender. Do not wrap in foil. Turn over and let steam escape for 10 minutes.

2. Scoop about 1 tbsp/15 g flesh from the center of each half, about 180 g total, leaving a sturdy wall. Spread the shells and scooped flesh separately on shallow trays. Refrigerate promptly after the brief steam-release stage and chill to 40°F (4°C) or below, allowing at least 1 hour. Do not leave potatoes at room temperature to cool fully.

3. Mix the cold scooped potato, beans, tomato, parsley, 1 tbsp oil, 1 tbsp lemon juice, remaining 1/4 tsp salt and pepper into a chunky relish. In the second bowl mix yogurt with the remaining 1 tbsp lemon juice. In the third mix cheddar, diced apple and scallion. Cover and refrigerate all three bowls until serving.

4. Set out chilled potato shells and the three separate toppings with their own spoons. Each guest takes one shell and adds one-twelfth of the relish, yogurt and apple-cheddar mixture. Put out a few shells at a time, keeping the reserve and topping bowls cold.

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Bring it

Take all components fully chilled at 40°F (4°C) or below in a cooler: shells flat, relish in one lidded bowl, yogurt in another and apple-cheddar crunch in the third. Include three spoons. During packing, travel and display, keep cold food at 40°F (4°C) or below and hot food at 140°F (60°C) or above. Allow no more than 2 hours combined outside those controls, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C). Discard food beyond that limit.

Finish at the gathering

No stove, oven or microwave is needed for the cold version. Allow 5 minutes to set the bowls into ice and arrange the first six shells. Do not leave the reserve beside the display; keep it cold until a clean replacement tray is needed.

Make it yours

The station works for a winter buffet or an all-year game night. A small sample half shows the order of toppings without making guests read a long instruction card; identify dairy clearly.

Ingredient labels

Check cheese, yogurt and canned-bean labels for added allergens. Use separate utensils for all bowls to reduce cross-contact.

A useful detail

The 175-minute total includes roasting, scooping, shallow chilling and preparing the toppings. Actual cooling may take longer than an hour. All of the scooped potato is used in the bean relish; these are not hollow crisp skins or deep-fried boats.

Another way

Use 240 g drained canned chickpeas, roughly crushed, instead of white beans.

Replace parsley with 10 g chopped chives and keep the same three-bowl assembly.

Keep it well

Keep potato shells and all toppings covered separately at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 2 days; the apple may discolor slightly. Do not freeze the assembled dish. If serving the shells hot instead, reheat only the cooked shells to 165°F (74°C) and keep the cold toppings chilled until assembly. Respect the combined travel-and-display limit in “Bring it.”