

Colcannon: Irish Cottage Cookery

2 pounds potatoes: Organic Carola, Kennebeck, Yukon Gold, Yellow Finn, or your favorite mashing potatoes, peeled and thickly sliced
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut in pats
approximately 1 to 1.5 cups **saved potato cooking water**
Salt and freshly ground pepper
2 scallions trimmed and finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
3 tablespoons olive oil
6 leaves kale (Tuscan, Dinosaur or Lacinato) finely chopped stems and leaves
3 large leaves collard greens, finely chopped stems and leaves

In a large pot, cook potatoes with 2 inches water, over medium heat. Do not salt. Simmer, partially covered, 20 to 25 minutes; stir often. Cook until soft and tender. **Save cooking water.** Mash potatoes with 1 cup, or more, potato cooking water. Add butter, and salt. Mashed potatoes should be quite thick. Set aside.

In a large pot, sauté scallions and garlic over medium heat in olive oil. Cook about 8 to 10 minutes, or until softened. Stir often. Add kale and collards, increase heat to medium-high and stir constantly. Cook about 6 to 8 minutes, or until finely chopped stems are tender and leaves wilt, but are still bright green. Add salt.

Gradually add 2 or 3 spoons of sautéed greens into mashed potatoes, stir well. Keep adding sautéed greens to your desired taste. Taste to adjust salt. Add more potato water if too thick.

Leftovers: Place leftover Colcannon in a buttered au gratin dish. Refrigerate. Next day, brushed top with melted butter and bake Colcannon at 400 degrees F., approximately 25 to 30 minutes, or until top is crispy-brown and edges caramelize. Serve as a side dish, or under lamb shanks, chicken, fish, or Irish Stew.

*There are many regional variations of Colcannon—
Ireland's best-known traditional potato dish. In some areas green
cabbage was added, in others kale was preferred. In parts of Dublin,
Wicklow, and Wexford, parsnips were added, and onions and scallions
are featured in several of the versions.*

*Colcannon was one of the festive dishes eaten at Halloween, when a
ring, thimble, or coin would be hidden in the fluffy green-flecked mass.
The ring denotes marriage; the thimble—spinster; the coin—prosperity.
Edited quote from *Irish Traditional Cooking*, 1999, Darina Allen*