

## A MEDITATION ON MASHED POTATOES

by Gary Podesto

*Both of this month's selections would be at home on a holiday table. The cold-weather flavors and hearty communal fare of the season pair well with either of these refreshing rouges.*

*For the experienced cook, mashed potatoes are the little black dress of side dishes. Dress them up or down, they're endlessly adaptable. Call them what you like—mashed, whipped, purée, pommes purée—chances are you'll eat them this month. A holiday table rarely feels complete without them.*

*You likely already have a favorite recipe, so I won't offer a new one—just a few ideas to elevate your next batch. Consider them refinements rather than instructions. There's a quiet ritual in turning humble boiled potatoes into something ethereal: fluffy yet creamy, seasoned simply but precisely. Technique matters—choosing the right potatoes, managing heat, and handling the starch gently. Mashed potatoes reward patience and restraint: don't overwork them, keep everything warm, and serve promptly.*

### THE METHOD

#### Choose and prep the potatoes

Use about 50% Yukon Golds for creaminess and 50% russets for fluffiness (a 60/40 split either way is fine). Peel and cut into uniform 1½–2-inch chunks so they cook evenly. Rinse and drain to remove excess starch. For large batches, consider cooking the varieties separately—they often cook at different rates.

#### Boil gently

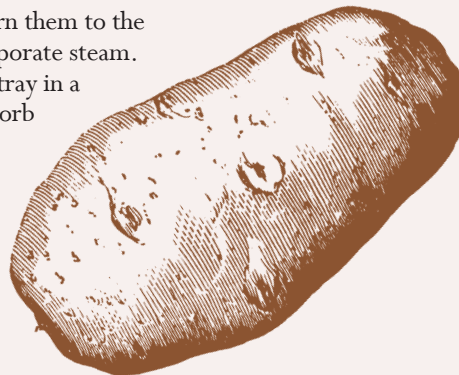
Cover potatoes with cold water by 1–2 inches. Add 1 to 1½ teaspoons of kosher salt per quart—the water should taste like mild broth. Bring to a simmer, and then reduce heat to maintain it. Avoid boiling vigorously, which can lead to waterlogged spuds. Cook until tender, 15–20 minutes depending on size.

#### Dry thoroughly

Drain well in a colander. For small batches, return them to the hot pot for a minute or two over low heat to evaporate steam. For larger batches, spread on a parchment-lined tray in a medium oven for 3–4 minutes. Dry potatoes absorb butter and cream better.

#### Mash with care

While still hot, pass the potatoes through a ricer or food mill. For a more rustic texture, use a sturdy masher and a light touch to avoid overworking the starch.



Gary Podesto is a cook at Chez Panisse restaurant in Berkeley, California, and is the chief culinary collaborator for the Climate Farm School. His work aims to revitalize the ritual of gathering around the hearth and table while promoting the values of edible education and regenerative agriculture. Learn more at [www.garypodesto.net](http://www.garypodesto.net).



2022 LANGUEDOC MONTPEYROUX ROUGE  
DOMAINE D'AUPILHAC

**E**VERY TIME I OPEN A BOTTLE of one of Sylvain Fadat's wines, I think of the saying "your favorite artist's favorite artist." Sylvain may not be widely known on our shores, but he is revered throughout France's wine community for having created one of the South's great domaines from scratch. Back in 1989, he took over his family's vines and, without a proper cellar, made his first few vintages in makeshift barrels outside. He built his cellar in 1993, followed by his most ambitious project: the clearing and planting of a rocky amphitheater high above the town of Montpeyroux. In other words, he has moved heaven and earth to create one of southern France's most exciting domaines. And yet, rather than make ornate and grandiose wines, Sylvain focuses on purity and letting his terroir speak for itself. Aged thirty months in neutral wood, this Mourvèdre blend is a dense, chewy, and faintly briny knockout, and rustic in the best way. —Tom Wolf

\$33.00 PER BOTTLE \$356.40 PER CASE

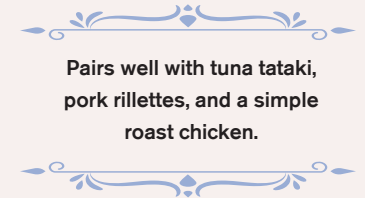


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2024 MORGON "VIEILLES VIGNES"  
JEAN PAUL ET CHARLY THÉVENET

**L**IKE HIS FRIEND AND PEER Alex Foillard, Charly Thévenet felt compelled to cut his teeth on his own project when he was just starting out, rather than immediately join the well-established and widely beloved family domaine created by his father, Jean Paul. But after more than a decade of crafting beautiful Régnié under his own label, Charly joined forces with his father a few years ago to work on Jean Paul's final vintages together. Charly is at the helm of the family domaine today—his father still offering guidance—and he is fine-tuning, rather than revolutionizing, the practices that made Thévenet synonymous with top-quality cru Beaujolais. Vintage 2024 proved ideal for someone with Charly's tastes: a cool and rainy start set the tone for a bottling that teed up delicate and fragrant Gamay. With old vines that date back to 1929, there is plenty of depth and soul, but overall, this is a lithe and ambrosial Morgon, evoking raspberries, rose petals, and a touch of tea. —Tom Wolf



Pairs well with tuna tataki, pork rillettes, and a simple roast chicken.

\$42.00 PER BOTTLE \$453.60 PER CASE

					
2022 Languedoc Montpeyroux Rouge Domaine d'Aupilhac	30% Mourvèdre, 30% Carignan, 25% Syrah, 10% Grenache, 5% Cinsault	35-year-old vines Limestone, clay, scree, blue marl	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62°F Decant optional	Dark berries, iron, brine Rustic, lively, full-bodied	Drink now through 2035
2024 Morgon "Vieilles Vignes" Jean Paul et Charly Thévenet	Gamay	77-year-old vines, on average Sandy granite	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 56–60°F Decant optional	Raspberry, rose petal, tea Lithe, fragrant, finessed	Drink now through 2035

LEFT Désirée and Sylvain Fadat. © Joanie Bonfiglio

COVER Charly Thévenet. © Joanie Bonfiglio