

ALI'S KITCHEN

Rustic Horseradish Root Mash was a Smash!

Experienced sensory panelists did not wrinkle their noses, but instead asked for seconds

Column and photos by Ali Carter, Wisconsin Potato Growers Auxiliary

I have always thought the term “taste-tester” was an odd one. Yet, as I write this, my mind is unable to come up with an alternative that feels less odd but still clearly understandable. A quick Google search gives me the simple option of “taster,” and the slightly more explanatory “food taster.”

A deeper search brings up the term “sensory panelist.” That one tickles me, so we will go with it today!

Whatever term you want to use, my friends and family are the ones to fill the role. When they eat at our house, they know that I rarely make the same thing the same way twice, and they will often find something on the table that I have never

attempted before.

These brave sensory panelists fearlessly take bites of mystery leftover casseroles and allow me to smother their chicken wraps with the unnamed sauce I whipped up with a little of this and a little of that.

This past September, I was given a fabulous set of circumstances involving some of my very favorite sensory panelists.

The next recipe for this column needed to be developed, and we were welcoming three wonderful friends to our home to enjoy a weekend of fishing with Mike.

These friends all happened to be experienced foodies with adventurous palates! A house full of men, hungry after a day of fresh air and paddling canoes, seemed like the ideal way to do a trial run of a *Badger Common'Tater* recipe!

POTATOES MASHED WITH PARSNIPS

I called my youngest son into the kitchen so that I had someone to hear about my idea. He nodded his affirmation as I told him about potatoes mashed with parsnips.

He said, “uh-huh,” and, “yep,” as I waved my hands through the air and explained that we would also



Ingredients: Rustic Horseradish Root Mash

- 2 pounds Yukon Gold or russet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 medium rutabaga, peeled and cubed
- 4 medium parsnips, peeled and cubed
- 1 stick butter, cubed
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 large garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup prepared white horseradish
- salt and pepper to taste

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mash up a rutabaga and toss in some fresh garlic.

My voice became squeaky and high pitched with excitement, so sure was I that my son would applaud the final ingredient, but he crinkled up his nose and said, "Horseradish? I'm not sure about that, Mom."

He could see that he'd crushed my hopes of a dazzling recipe in the making, and after gently reminding me that horseradish can be overwhelming and not everyone likes it, he urged me to move forward with my plan cautiously.

That Saturday evening, with candles lit, yacht rock radio playing in the background and wine glasses filled, we all settled around the kitchen table where Mike and our friends played along happily and guessed at the ingredients of the Rustic Root Mash on their plates.

We have some brilliant friends who easily picked out the potato, parsnips, sour cream, garlic and rutabaga. They knew there was something else there adding to the flavor profile, but it

eluded them all.

I am pleased to tell you that when I announced the flavor to be horseradish, there were no wrinkled noses but plenty of requests for seconds.

DIRECTIONS

Place the cubed potatoes, rutabaga and parsnips into a large pot and add enough water to cover the veggies.

Bring to a medium boil and cook, uncovered, until tender and easily pierced with a fork, about 20 minutes. Drain the water from the pot.

In a small saucepan, warm the butter, sour cream and milk until the butter is fully melted and the sour cream is well incorporated.

Add milk mixture, garlic, horseradish, salt and pepper to the potatoes.

Mash until smooth using a potato masher and then transfer to a serving dish. **BCT**

Enjoy!

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