

For That Special Someone: Slimy Green Potato Crust Quiche

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My current spouse is not fond of eggs or spices and is not thrilled with spinach, kale, zucchini, or any of those other superfoods he calls “slimy greens.”

I therefore find it useful to prepare a hot and spicy slimy green quiche for us sometimes, as anyone who has ever been in a long-term relationship will understand.

Experienced cooks will recognize this recipe is a combination I concocted, largely out of spite, from longstanding classics: creamed spinach, frittata, and mashed potato.

The spouse prefers baked russet potatoes, so I make sure to always have on hand some knobby little new potatoes or Yukons, together with lots of eggs from the neighborhood chickens, ducks or snakes, and whatever slimy greens my lunatic gardening friends want to unload.

Why go to all this bother? Some say that cooking is an act of love. I say eating whatever is put in front of you is the only act of love that counts, plus is a test of courage and a little act of revenge all rolled into one. And nothing delivers that like a hearty dish of slimy greens.



Ingredients

Some potatoes

A big onion or a couple shallots

A bunch of greens: spinach, chard, kale or whatever; throw in a squash if you want

Three eggs, four if they're small

1 cup of milk or heavy cream

2 or 3 tablespoons unsalted butter

1/2 cup sharp cheddar or similar cheese

Procedure

1. Deal with your potatoes. Whatever they are, wash and peel and slice into one-eighth-inch thick rounds until you have enough to line a pie pan or equivalent baking dish, oiled of course, to create a crust (I use this spray-on duck fat I found in, of all places, our local hardware store). Overlap the rounds if you feel like it. Bake at 375 for 30 or 40 minutes until potatoes are tender.

2. Or just do the same with leftover mashed potatoes. I prefer Yukon Golds.

3. Sauté onion or shallot in butter



and light salt and maybe oil if needed until tender but not brown. Chop greens into near oblivion and add. Depending on what you've got, it might take two or three pounds. Just eyeball what you think will fit into the pie pan.

4. Mix eggs with the milk or cream and a bit of salt and whatever spices you like that your spouse doesn't, such as nutmeg, paprika, white pepper, cayenne; or maybe some thyme, tarragon or chives.

5. Spread cheese around potato crust, fill with slimy greens, then pour in egg mixture not quite to the brim. I like to spray the top of the potato crust edges with that duck fat I mentioned.

6. Bake at 375 for about 35 minutes, or until puffy and golden. Remove from oven but leave in the pan to cool for at least 10 minutes.

7. Serve the slime. Feel the love.

Variations

1. Puffy Quiche Hell: Should you wish to bring someone under your permanent culinary sway, or just bring a premature end to their life with cholesterol, use this mega-rich custard for the quiche.

Mix one egg and three tablespoons of flour in a bowl, then mix in four more eggs.

Mix one cup milk into one cup of crème fraîche*. Pour the egg mixture through a sieve** into this. Add the hated spices and other flavors and pour into prepared slimy pie pan and go from there. Might need to bake and cool an extra 10 minutes.

*What even is crème fraîche? Not important. If you don't have it or can't find it (they don't have it at my hardware store), you can make it by combining a pint of heavy cream with an ounce of buttermilk or plain yogurt and letting it sit out for 12 hours. Doesn't that sound yummy? Weirdly, it is. Or just substitute with Mexican crema, which is easy to find and good in its own right.

**About that sieve. I first saw this on “The Bear” when Sydney made a proper French omelet and I was like, “Really? Do I even own a sieve?” Doing this removes the so-called “chalazae,” rope-like protein that holds the yolk in place that can become chewy when cooked. At least that's what the French say. So I bought a sieve, and I do this now and after trying to make 1,000 omelets it seems to work.

2. Crustless for the Crustiness Among Us: I am lazy, lazy, lazy (it was even a chore to type “lazy” three times) and always on the lookout for ways to leverage my laziness. One easy way is to forget the crust for a quiche and go straight to the pie pan.

Important tip: You'll want to grease the pan before doing anything else, but then use whatever cheese you've got for the first layer, maybe more than you would otherwise. You don't have to, but it will form a bit of a crust all by itself as long as you use something firm, which you should. And if you're not using cheese, then see you in Cheese-Hater Hell. ■