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## Sumptuous potato salad for summer barbecues

By Susie Iventosch



Summer is my very favorite season because I love warm evenings and the unbridled anticipation of outdoor dining, patio barbecues and picnics in the park. And, when you think of barbecues and picnics, potato salad isn't far behind! This one calls for blue cheese dressing instead of mayonnaise, along with bacon, caramelized shallots and the traditional celery and boiled eggs. Try this one out for your Fourth of July celebration. If you love blue cheese, you are going to love this potato salad!

### Blue Cheese Potato Salad

#### INGREDIENTS

2 1/4 pounds red potatoes

1 teaspoon lemon pepper (or plain salt)

6 strips of bacon, cooked and crumbled (I use turkey bacon, but pork is fine too)

2 stalks celery, sliced or diced

4 hardboiled eggs, chopped

3 large shallots thinly sliced and caramelized in olive oil

2 tablespoons minced parsley

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon

1/2 teaspoon white pepper

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup yogurt blue cheese dressing (recipe below or can use bottled)

#### DIRECTIONS

Fill a large pot with water and add the lemon pepper. Scrub the potatoes and put them in the pot with the water. If you have large potatoes, halve or quarter them, but if they are the small red potatoes, just put them in whole. (Do not put the potatoes in already boiling water because they don't cook evenly that way and the outsides cook much faster than the insides.) Now this is where cooking potatoes gets a little tricky. Boil them for anywhere from 5-15 minutes, depending upon the size of your potato chunks. The smaller the potato pieces the less time they will take to cook. Test them regularly during cooking to avoid overcooking them. They are done when a knife easily inserts through the potatoes and they are tender all the way through.

Remove potatoes from the heat and strain out the liquid. Cool completely. Once cooled, cut the potatoes into bite-sized pieces and put into a large bowl. Toss together gently with bacon, celery, eggs, caramelized shallots and parsley. Drizzle olive oil and lemon juice over salad and toss. Toss again with blue cheese dressing. Season to taste with salt and white pepper. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Garnish with parsley sprigs or minced parsley and a dash of paprika.

#### Yogurt Blue Cheese Dressing

(Yields 1 1/4 cups dressing, but you won't need all of this so save it for later!)

#### INGREDIENTS

5 ounces crumbled blue cheese, softened to room temperature

2 tablespoons white wine vinegar

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/8 teaspoon white pepper

1/2 cup plain nonfat yogurt

#### DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, smash blue cheese until fairly smooth using a fork. Stir in white wine vinegar, olive oil and white pepper. Blend until well integrated. Add yogurt and mix well. This makes a very thick dressing. Add more olive oil or yogurt as desired to arrive at the dressing consistency you enjoy. Refrigerate until ready to use.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.

Reach the reporter at: [suziven@gmail.com](mailto:suziven@gmail.com)

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