

White Christmas Soup

Sally Clarkson, bestselling author

Our family could eat potato soup every day of the year because it tastes so amazingly wonderful, but we especially enjoy it on Christmas Eve. We associate it with the candlelight meal, the quiet, beautiful time together every year. The soup we make at Christmas is a simple one in honor of the kind of food the shepherds probably ate. Actually, I am pretty sure those Middle Eastern shepherds did not eat potato soup! But it was our own original attempt to keep the meal simple.

Makes about 7 servings

- 8-10 sizable red potatoes, peeled and chopped or sliced into small pieces (Red potatoes are a little bit sweeter and have a lower glycemic count, but use whatever potatoes you prefer.)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced (can substitute ½ teaspoon garlic powder or 1 teaspoon garlic paste)
- ¼ cup (1/2 stick) butter
- 2-3 cups milk, half-and-half, or a combination of the two (We use 1 ½ cups of each for our special Christmas meal!)
- 1 ½ - 2 cups grated aged cheddar cheese (more cheese at Christmas, less for daily soup)
- 1-2 teaspoons fine sea salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- Sour cream and chopped fresh dill for garnish
- Cooked, chopped bacon, optional

1. Place the potatoes in a pan of water. Bring to a boil and cook until tender. As they cook, place the oil in a pan and sauté the onion with the garlic until onion is translucent.
2. When the potatoes are cooked, drain the water and add the butter in small pieces so it will melt quickly. Add the onion mixture. Mash all of this together well with a potato masher.
3. Slowly stir in the cream or milk, adding ½ cup at a time until the soup looks like the right consistency. (Potatoes soak up liquid over time, so usually I need to add the full amount.)
4. Stir in 1 ½ cups of cheese plus the salt and pepper. Keep soup warm until ready to serve.
5. Just before serving, ladle soup into your favorite bowls. Sprinkle about a tablespoon of the remaining cheese over each, add a small scoop of sour cream, and then sprinkle the dill on top for a festive look. We do not add bacon to our Christmas soup because the Jewish shepherds would never have eaten pork. But when we make this soup throughout the year, we definitely use a sprinkle of bacon, and it's delicious.

