

CRISPY POTATOES WITH HOT SAUCE

PATATAS BRAVAS

This tapa bar favorite is usually prepared to order. A plate heaped with the crisp potato cubes topped with the piquant sauce is placed in the middle of the table for several friends to share. Spear the cubes with cocktail picks.



- ½ cup smooth tomato sauce, homemade (see page 10) or canned
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon hot pimentón
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled
- 2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- 2 pounds baking potatoes, such as russets or Idahos
- Olive oil, for frying
- Salt
- Garlic Mayonnaise 1 (page 177) (optional)

In a small bowl, combine the tomato sauce, garlic, oil, cumin, pimentón, oregano, and vinegar. Set aside.

Peel the potatoes and cut them into 1½-inch cubes.

Pour oil into a deep skillet to a depth of 1 inch. Heat the oil until it is shimmering but not smoking (360°F). Fry the potato cubes for 2 minutes. Reduce the heat so the oil is just bubbling. Fry the potatoes for 10 minutes, or until they are cooked all the way through. Then raise the heat again and fry until they are golden and crisp, about 3 minutes more.

Drain the potatoes on paper towels. Sprinkle with salt. Heap them in a bowl. Dribble the sauce over them. If desired, garlic mayonnaise also can be dribbled over the potatoes. Serve them with toothpicks or cocktail forks.