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Istrian Potatoes

Serves 4

This is the first of many fabulous recipes I have made from Karen Evenden's informative cookbook, *A Taste of Croatia: Savoring the Food, People, and Traditions of Croatia's Adriatic Coast*. Karen and her husband, Bill, sailed up and down the Adriatic coast, stopping to savor the regional specialties and collect recipes. This recipe comes from Istria, the northern part of Croatia, where Italian influence is strong. The potatoes are tossed with diced prosciutto, tomatoes, garlic, and parsley and baked gratin style, with an irresistible golden-crusting topping of Parmesan cheese.

2 tsp unsalted butter, at room temperature
1-1/2 lb/680 g German Butterball or Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-in./2.5cm cubes
2 oz/55 g prosciutto, diced
1 Roma tomato, halved lengthwise, seeded, and diced
2 tbsp finely minced fresh flat-leaf parsley
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp kosher or fine sea salt
1/4 tsp freshly ground pepper
3/4 cup/180 ml heavy whipping cream
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, preferably Parmigiano-Reggiano

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350°F/180°C/gas 4. Generously grease a 1-1/2 qt/1.4-L ovenproof baking dish or gratin dish with the butter.
2. In a large bowl, toss together the potatoes, prosciutto, tomato, parsley, garlic, oil, salt, and pepper. Turn the mixture into the prepared baking dish. Pour the cream over the top.
3. Cover the dish with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil, sprinkle the cheese evenly over the top, and continue to bake until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork and the top is golden, 35 to 45 minutes longer. Serve immediately or keep warm until ready to serve.