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Bacon, Scallion, Potato & Pea Salad

Serves 6 - 8

Potato salads are not always cold – they're delicious when served warm as well. Potato salads that feature a vinaigrette-style dressing are especially delicious when served warm. Cooked potatoes are tossed with a classic vinaigrette that features the slightly sweet vinegar, apple cider vinegar. Use either olive oil or reserved bacon fat – your choice – for the oil component of the dressing. The mustard acts as the emulsifier for the dressing forcing the vinegar and oil into cooperation ready to be absorbed by the warm potatoes. The peas and scallions add a pop of fresh green color.

Ingredients:

12 smoked bacon strips, cooked until crispy, crumbled
3 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes
12 oz. baby peas, frozen
4-6 scallions, thinly sliced, white and green parts

Dressing:

1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1/3 cup olive oil (or bacon fat)
1 tablespoon stone-ground mustard
1 clove garlic, crushed
1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

1. Prepare the bacon by baking in a 400°F oven on a parchment-lined baking pan until crisp, about 12-16 minutes depending on the thickness of the slices. Drain on paper towels, crumble when cooled. Set aside.
2. Meanwhile, prepare the vinaigrette dressing by combining the vinegar, oil, mustard, crushed garlic, salt and pepper. Whisk well until emulsified.
3. Rinse the baby peas under water to defrost – no need to cook; they were blanched in the freezing process. Thinly slice the scallions. Set aside the peas and scallions in a large bowl.
4. Scrub the potatoes well, cut into a 3/4-inch dice. Submerge the potatoes in a saucepan with cold water. Salt the water generously as you would for pasta. Over medium-high heat, bring the potatoes to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Cook until the potatoes are just tender to the tip of a knife. Do not overcook. Drain well.
5. While the potatoes are still hot, toss with the dressing. If serving warm, add the peas and scallions. If serving cold, allow the potatoes to cool completely, then add the peas and scallions. Top with the bacon crumbles just prior to serving.