

Crab Stuffed Twice Baked Potatoes

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4 large baking potatoes
2 tablespoons of cream cheese, softened at room temperature
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) of butter
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon of freshly cracked black pepper, or to taste
1/4 teaspoon of Cajun seasoning (like [Slap Ya Mama](#)), or to taste, *optional*
2 teaspoons of grated onion
1/4 to 1/2 cup of half and half or cream
1 cup of shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 pound of fresh crab meat, or 2 pouches or cans, *drained*
Paprika, *to garnish*

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Scrub potatoes and poke several holes in each of them. Bake for 45 minutes directly on the oven rack, spacing them at least an inch apart. Check by inserting a knife into the potato to see if it is tender; if not, return to the oven for an additional 5 to 10 minutes, or as needed. Set aside to cool.

Turn out the crab into a colander; pick through for shell and set aside to drain. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Slice the potatoes in half lengthwise and scoop out the potato pulp. Combine the potato pulp with the cream cheese, butter, salt, pepper, Cajun seasoning, and onion until well blended. Add enough cream to moisten the potatoes; stir in the cheddar. Add the crab meat and toss gently to combine. Refill the potato shells and sprinkle each potato lightly with paprika.

If serving immediately, bake at 400 degrees F for about 15 minutes, until heated through. Otherwise these can be flash frozen individually and then wrapped and packaged for the freezer.

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Tip: To easily pick out any shell, spread crab on a baking sheet in a single layer and place in a 200 degree oven for 3 minutes. The shell will be visible and easy to pick out. Use small red potatoes and a small cookie scoop and serve these as a party appetizer.

Basic Twice Baked Potatoes: To make these regular twice baked potatoes, eliminate the crab and increase the shredded cheese to 1-1/2 cups. May also add some extra cheese on top toward the end of baking if desired.

Loaded Twice Baked Potatoes: Omit the crab. Prepare and bake potatoes as above, topping with shredded cheese. Spoon tops with a layer of sour cream, top with cooked, crumbled bacon and slices of green onions, before serving.

To Freeze: Prepare potatoes and stuff. Place on a baking sheet and flash freeze. Wrap individually, then bag in a labeled freezer bag. To cook preheat oven to 400 degrees F, thaw potatoes (may use defrost on the microwave) then cook until warmed through, about 30 minutes. Test centers with a fork.

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