[The Potato] William Paine

Date: This recipe is from Reel 1 of William Paine's Papers, correspondence dated 1768-1822. | 1768/01/01 to 1822/12/31

Contributors
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Type
Agriculture
Food

Ingredients
potato
wine
oil
vinegar
prunes
salt

Places
Peru
India
Barbary
Spain
London

Source: William Paine Papers
Institution: University Of New Brunswick | **Source Origin:** Loyalist Collection | **Reference:** MIC-Loyalist FC LFR.P3W5P3

Description

This recipe includes physical descriptions of the potato plant, as well as preparation suggestions. Reel 1. Image use courtesy of American Antiquarian Society.

Transcription

The Potato

The following curious the following curious
Description of the Potato is copied from a History of Plants
printed in 1633.

This plant (which is called of some, Sisarum Peru –
vianum, or Skyrrets of Peru) is generally of us called
Potatus or Potato's. It hath long rough flexible branches
trailing upon the ground like unto those of Pompions,
whereupon are set greene three cornered leaves, very
like those of the wild cucumber. There is not any
that have written of this plant, have said anything of
the flowers; therefore I rifer this assumption unto those
that shall hereafter have further knowledge of the
same. Yet have I had in my garden divers roots
that have flourished unto the first approach
of Winter, and have grown unto a great length of
branches, but they have brought forth no flowers,
at all; Whether because the winter causeth them
to perish before their time of flowering, or that they
be of nature barren of flowers, I am not certain.

The roots are many, thicke, and knobly, like unto the
roots of Peonies, or rather of the white Asphodile, joined
together at the top into one head in manner of the Skye-
root.

The Place

The Potato's grow in India, Barbary, Spain, and other hot
regions; of which I planted divers roots, (which I bought
at the exchange in London) in my garden, where they
flourished untill winter, at which time they perished
and rotted.

The Time

It flourisheth to the end of September. At the

first approach of great frosts the leaves together with
the roots and stalks do perish.

The Names.
Clusius calleth it Batata, Camotes, Amates, and Ignames:
in English, Potatoes, Potatus, and Potades.

The Nature

The leaves of Potato’s are hot and dry, or may evidently appeare by the taste: the roots are of a temperate qualities.

The Vertues

The Potato roots are among the Spaniards, Italians, Indians, and many other nations, ordinarie and common meat; which no doubt are of mighty and nourishing parts, and doe strengthen and comfort nature; whose nutriment is as it were a mean between flesh and fruit, but somewhat windie; yet being rested in the embers they lose much of their windinesse, especially being eaten sopped in wine.

Of those roots may be made conserves no less toothsome, wholsome and dainty than of the flesh of quinces, and likewise those comfortable and delicate meats called in shops. Morselli Placentulae and diuers other such like.

These roots may serve as a ground or foundation whereon the cunning Confectioner ^orSugarBaker may work and frame many comfortable and delicate conserves, and ^restorativesweet meats.

They are used to be eaten rosted in the ashes. Some when they be so rosted infuse them and sop them

in wine – and others, to give them the greater grace in eating, do boyle them with prunes, and so eat them. Likewise others dress them with oil, vinegar, and salt/every man according to his own taste and liking.

Annotations

History of Plants

This text is from John Gerard's The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes (London, 1633), p. 926.

The Potato recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes: https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/588