

Potato harvest

Kew on a Plate

Raymond Blanc: At the moment you're actually waiting for, digging this, beautiful new Jersey potatoes.

Narrator: We think of the potato as a British staple, so it's hard to believe they were once regarded as unfit for human consumption, suitable only as animal fodder, but today we can't get enough of them. From mashed to chipped; boiled to baked.

Raymond Blanc: They are so slippery, they so fresh. Look that's how delicate the skin is. And that to me is the best potato in the world – for that particular time of year, the best. That's the one you are waiting for – that and the first asparagus, the first pea – that's something to wait for.

There's so many ways to murder food. Okay, and you've taken so much time growing it, digging it, cleaning it, then you are going to cook it – so cook it well. And understand exactly what you are doing.

Narrator: Raymond compares a correct cooked potato and an over cooked potato.

Raymond Blanc: It looks the same. But it's not the same. That one is crumbling. You can see the wall of the potato on the outside are logged with water. It's all starchy and whitish inside. Whereas this one cuts beautifully! And that's really interesting here because in here, see, is a network okay of cells. Okay wrapped by amylose, okay and then when it's cooking the cell wall breaks - so the water coming in and out and that will cook the potatoes through. That gives that beautiful melting quality. And here look. Look at the difference. You can't crumble this; this one is, like ooh, full of water. So you lose the flavour, you lose texture, you lose the experience.

Narrator: The potato is at its best when paired with salty foods, such as hard cheeses and fish, or warm spices, such as paprika and cayenne pepper or chilli. But it's just as delicious served with fresh herbs and dripping with melted butter. The simple spud really deserves its reputation as one of the nation's most loved veg

Raymond Blanc: And I think that dish really celebrates a very special moment in the food calendar. Bon appétit.