

*From the Kitchen at San Damiano Friary in San Francisco*

Loaded with nutrition and packed with flavor, this is one of my go-to side dishes. In the fall and winter we often get sweet potatoes donated, so it's a good thing we all like them around here. And it's a nice change of pace from the usual mashed russets or Yukon golds.

## **Mashed Sweet Potatoes**

For the basic recipe that serves eight, here's what you'll need:

4 large sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped coarsely (which yields about 6 to 8 cups of potatoes in the end)

1 stick of unsalted butter (that's half a cup, or 4 ounces)

½ cup of milk (fat-free, whole, or anything in between is fine)

¼ cup of maple syrup (or dark brown sugar, packed)

1 Tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon of salt

½ teaspoon of ground black pepper

½ teaspoon of grated nutmeg

Put the sweet potatoes into a large pot filled with enough cold water to just cover them. Bring this to a boil over high heat. When it comes to a boil, stir in the 1 Tablespoon of salt. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until tender, about 5-7 minutes. Drain the potatoes and return them to the hot pot. Mash them to the desired consistency. I like them fairly smooth but with some texture to it. A potato ricer (which looks like a large garlic press) works well here, but generally I just use a hand masher.

Now, melt the butter in a small pan over medium heat and cook it until the white milk solids sink to the bottom of the pan and turn brown, and the butter turns a deep gold color and smells nutty. In culinary parlance this is called "beurre noisette." Add this immediately to the pan of potatoes and stir it in. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well. Taste and adjust the seasoning before serving, adding a little more milk if it seems too thick. If you need to keep the potatoes warm, transfer them to a pretty covered casserole dish that you can serve from and hold it in a warm oven (200 degrees Fahrenheit) for up to 2 hours.

*~Br. Simon*