Tortilla de Patata (Potato Omelette Spanish Style)

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

- 6 or 7 potatoes, medium size.
- ½ onion
- 5 eggs
- salt
- pepper
- olive oil

Equipment

- a large pan
- a small pan
- a plate bigger than the small pan
- a fork

Instructions

Serves 4, 30 to 40 minutes to cook

While everyone who has been to Spain has probably had a chance to try this plate you can rarely see it prepared outside of the country.

Why is this? Probably because even though it is a simple recipe it has some tricky bits you have to handle carefully:

- **Getting old enough potatoes.** In most countries the only potatoes you can buy are young potatoes, while this recipe asks for older potatoes that can get golden when fried.
- **Boiling and frying at the same time.** While olive oil doesn't work well at high temperatures like peanut oil, it has a usually forgotten quality: it can boil at the same time it fries whatever you put in it. That is if you set the fire at that sweet spot, not too high, not too low. This allows the potatoes to both boil and fry.
- **Not overcooking the eggs.** It is fairly easy to let yourself go and fearing that the omelette might break you allow the eggs to form a thick, compact shape. But, as in its french counterpart, the beauty of the potato omelette happens when the insides are moist and almost difficult to manage.

Follow these steps for a golden potato omelette:

1. **peel the potatoes and cut them** in slices. The slices should be slightly thicker than the ones you would use for potato chips

2. **add a generous amount of olive oil** to a heated pan. You want at least a centimeter of depth that spreads around the whole surface of the pan. set the heat to a bit above medium
3. **chop the onion** in little bits and add it to the pan. make sure the heat is properly set by looking at the onions: they have to look as if they are being both fried and boiled at the same time
4. **add the potatoes** to the pan when the onions start to be slightly golden
5. **now is a good time to check** if there is enough oil in the pan: all the potatoes should be touching a bit of oil, but they shouldn't be drenched or submerged in it
6. **leave the heat at medium** and cover the pan so the potatoes and the onion boil and fry at the same time
7. **stir the mix** everynow and then so every piece of potato releases its water and gets covered by the oil
8. **now is a good time to add salt** at your discrection
9. **put the eggs in a bowl** big enough to hold both the eggs and the potatoes and mix them thoroughly with a fork
10. **when the potatoes are boiled/fried** put the oil from the pan aside and mix the potatoes with the eggs in the big bowl. Leave them be for 5 or so minutes
11. **put a little bit of the olive oil** we used to fry the potatoes in a smaller pan. Set the heat to medium
12. **pour half of your potato/onion/eggs mix** in the small pan. Shake the pan, to avoid the mix from sticking

13. **after a minute and a half** maximum grab the plate, cover the pan and tilt it over. You probably want to do this on top of the sink. Do it in a smooth and quickly fashion. You want the omelette to be now on the plate, with the top side cooked and the bottom side uncooked
14. **put the pan back on the fire** and slide the omelette back into it, so the bottom uncooked side is in contact with the pan
15. **cook for another minute or so**, shaking the pan and slide the omelette onto a plate
16. **let it cool off** for a few minutes. This will allow the eggs to harden up a little bit, in case you thought the omelette was a bit 'undone'
17. **enjoy,** *your tortilla de patata is ready!*

DISCLAIMER: There are different recipes in every town, and probably in every bar in Spain. This is probably the most common one so if you tried one that had peppers, or no onions, or else, well, you are welcome to experiment :)