

Salt Potatoes

Syracuse, otherwise known as the Salt City, lays claim to being the originator of salt potatoes. As the story goes, workers cooked their potatoes in the hot brine of the local salt wells -- an easy way to create a hot lunch.

At the Hounds Ale, you may have been introduced to this treat while standing in line for dinner, as Mike Miller and his helpers brought them around to allay your hunger pangs.

Central New York grocery stores sell salt potatoes in bags, with each bag containing 4.25 lbs of potatoes and 12 oz of salt. (It used to be 4 lbs potatoes and 1 lb salt, but I guess they're getting "health conscious.") The recipe on the bag says to pour the salt into a large pot containing 4 quarts of water, boil the water, add the potatoes, and cook them for approximately 20 minutes. I think of it as bringing the water back to a boil and then boiling for an additional 10 minutes, but the amount of time is not critical and will vary with the ratio of potatoes to hot water. The potatoes are done when they are tender if pierced by a fork. At the Hounds Ale we have generally used 8 oz salt to 4 lbs of potatoes, but the ratio is not critical. The goal is that when you remove the potatoes from the water, a crust of white salt forms on their skins.

If salt potatoes as such are not available in your area, you can recreate this delicacy using small potatoes (no larger than 2 ½" diameter by 3" long) and normal table salt or kosher salt. Baby or creamer potatoes are a bit smaller and therefore probably take less time to cook.

If you attended a county fair or firemen's field day in Central New York, your salt potatoes would probably be served in a pool of melted butter. We don't bother with the butter at our Ale, but you might enjoy it.

Additional information can be found [here](#).