


# the ELK'S COOKBOOK

## IT'S WINTER SOUP TIME!

By Gabi Strickland Walker. Gabi is the creator and editor of Walker Mtn. Eats Facebook group, where she shares her delicious recipes which are tried-and-true tested on her husband, Gar, her girls, and her family, church family, and friends.



I was genuinely surprised by the very first spoonful of this soup. It was one of those rare kitchen moments when you realize—you've finally nailed it. Rich, creamy, comforting... perfection in a bowl. I've always loved this particular soup, ever since the days when there was a Bob Evans in downtown Charleston and it was our go-to lunch spot at least once a week. Without fail, this soup and a salad were my regular order. Over the years, I've tried several "copycat" versions, but none ever quite hit the mark. Last week, I came across a couple of recipes that finally made sense. I blended elements from both, using what I imagined a restaurant might do—and to my delight, it worked beautifully. The verdict around our table was unanimous. Low went back for seconds, and Ash finished three full bowls. The girls had never tried this soup at Bob Evans—apparently it's not what they usually order—but Ash declared she would have ordered it every time had she known it was this good. Even Pae, who isn't much of a potato fan, loved the soup itself. 



### Recipe: **BOB EVANS' CHEDDAR BAKED POTATO SOUP** *From the Kitchen of Gabi Strickland Walker*

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 (10 3/4oz) can Campbell's cheddar cheese soup
- 2 C chicken broth - divided
- 2 C sharp cheddar cheese - shredded
- 4 C whole milk
- 10 3/4 oz (soup can) whole milk
- 2 T butter
- 2 T cornstarch
- 1 t salt
- 1/2 t pepper
- 1/2 t onion powder
- 1/2 t garlic salt
- 7 medium potatoes - peeled/microwaved/diced (Quick option: 2 bags of refrigerated diced potatoes)

#### DIRECTIONS

**PREP 15-20 MIN • REFRIDGERATE FOR 60 MIN+**

- STEP 1** Wash and peel potatoes. Prick several times with a fork, place on a microwave safe plate. Cook using the "Baked Potato" setting until fork tender but still firm. Allow to cool while soup is prepared. (Quick option: purchase two bags of refrigerated, diced potatoes.)
- STEP 2** In a large pot over medium heat, add the can of soup, 1 C broth, 1 soup can full of milk, and stir until well combined and bring to a low boil.
- STEP 3** Add shredded cheese and remaining 3 C milk, bring to a boil, stirring frequently until cheese is melted.
- STEP 4** In a small bowl add 1C broth, stir in cornstarch. Stir to combine well. Add cornstarch/broth mixture to boiling soup, and stir well. Add spices and butter.
- STEP 5** Bring back to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes.
- STEP 6** Dice potatoes and add to soup OR add in two bags of refrigerated, diced potatoes.. Simmer for an additional 15min more, taste for salt. Top with chopped green onion tops, real bacon bits, and shredded cheese.