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Comfort Food  
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I chose *lefse* for my comfort food. Lefse is a staple of traditional Norwegian food, kind of like the tortilla of my mother's homeland, but generally made with potatoes. She came to Minnesota on a college exchange in the mid-1960s and a few years later moved back to the U.S. to marry my dad (who she'd met while in MN). They were teachers in Southwestern Wisconsin for a couple years and then moved to Iowa, where my dad became a college band director and my mom taught Norwegian, and where I grew up (and first went to college). My mom still lives there.

The first photo comes from the Waldorf College cookbook, which actually contains lots of Norwegian food recipes – as this area happens to have a lot of people with Norwegian heritage – including several for lefse. My mom always made lefse leading up to Christmas time. It's common for people to put butter and sugar on lefse, roll it up, and eat it like a dessert or with coffee (which in Norway is not only drunk in the morning but usually in the afternoon with some baked goods and other treats, often with guests). My grandpa in Norway would also use lefse like a tortilla, though, and loved to eat leftover fish (brown trout or whitefish we caught from the lake at the family cabin and fried the night before) with fried potatoes and put it together in the lefse for breakfast. When we were at the cabin, my grandmother (a great cook, who



worked as a cook for some wealthy people in Oslo before marrying my grandpa) made all kinds of delicious food, including a special "hyttalefse" (cabin lefse) that I think was made with slightly different ingredients and was definitely thicker/fluffier and in smaller pieces, then served in triangles (more like a quesadilla). Either way it's made, my preferred way to eat it as a kid and now is with butter, followed by a couple slices of special, Norwegian sweet, brown goat cheese.

I have lots of great memories tied up with lefse from over the years. We've carried on the tradition in my own family, but only to a limited extent: helping my mom make it when we've been back in Iowa during the Thanksgiving (to eat then, when it's fresh, and to save it for Christmas). I've included a couple more recent photos here of my kids and their cousins and my mom, and my sister also in one of them. I know my mom is giving me a lefse grill for Christmas and I'm pledging to start making it with my girls at our house now, too.



The beauty is that such a grill is also perfect for making *injera* (a sourdough, pancakey type bread used in much of Ethiopian food and which serves a similar purpose, but I think remains much more of a staple), so if we get really ambitious, we can use it to celebrate my girls' heritage as well.



To the left is a photo of the finished product (the thin, rolled version of lefse, which is probably most common), followed by (most of ) the recipe that my sister now uses for lefse.

photo source:

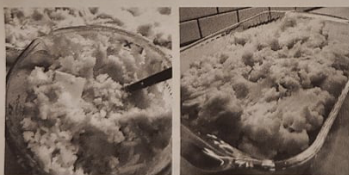
<https://ramshacklepantry.com/lefse-recipe-using-real-potatoes-a-norwegian-tradition/>

## Day 1: Potato Prep

5 lbs potatoes  
1 stick of butter

You want your taters really dry for lefse or you'll end up with a wet, sticky mess when rolling. So, cook em up a day ahead of time. Start a large pot on the stove and heat to boiling while you:

1. Wash and peel the potatoes.
  2. Use a paring knife and be sure to remove any eyes or tough/dark spots from the potatoes that the peeler missed — tough spots won't rice evenly and will make a sticky mess out of your whole operation when you get to cooking.
  3. Dice the potatoes for even cooking — plus, it makes them easier to rice.
  4. Boil until soft when tested with a fork.
  5. Drain the potatoes.
  6. Rice while hot.
  7. For every 4c riced and lightly packed potatoes, add 3 T of butter, cubed.  
*Mix the butter into the hot, riced potatoes. You don't want any unevenly distributed chunky bits of butter, or you'll end up with a sticky mess when you get to rolling.*
- Pat the warm, buttery riced potatoes into a 9×13 pan and let cool uncovered on the counter. Remember how I said dry potatoes are the best? They'll steam off any extra moisture.
8. Put in the fridge overnight.

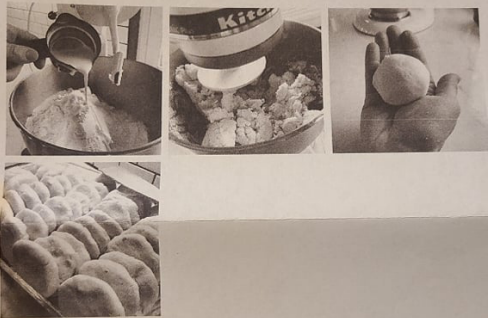


## Day 2: Roll and Cook!

Per 4 cups of lightly packed, riced potatoes as prepared on Day 1, add:

1.5 C flour  
1 tsp salt  
2 tsp sugar  
½ C heavy cream

Plus, a generous amount of extra flour. Seriously, lots and lots and lots. Don't be stingy here!



### 1. Mix the dough

Blend riced potatoes, sugar, flour, salt, and heavy cream well. I find a dough hook works well and give it a good 2-3 minutes on medium.

### 2. Prep your dough into patties

This is a solid time-saver once the rush of rolling and cooking begins. Roll into balls slightly larger than a golf ball and press gently between your palms. Place back into the 9×13 pan, and put the pan back in the fridge.

### 3. Pre-heat your cooking surface

Start at 375. You can go as high as 400 if you're a pro level baker with a fast approach, but 375 is a good temp to start with. My husband and I usually tag-team: one rolling and one flipping and crank it up to 400.

### 4. Prepare your rolling surface

Put ½ cup flour on the pastry board and rub it in. Roll your covered rolling pin across the flour