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## 1 Ingredient 8 Ways 八種變化

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# Potato spiel

## 薯仔八講

The humble spud is used around the world in myriad ways. With more than 5,000 varieties, ranging from russet and red to white, yellow and blue, and from waxy to floury, the versatile, carb-loaded staple lends itself to a wide range of culinary delights

平平無奇的薯仔用途廣泛，世界各地菜式都可以找到它的蹤跡。薯仔品種極多，從褐皮、紅皮到白皮、黃皮和藍皮，從爽脆到粉狀，超過5,000種。它非常百搭，碳水化合物含量高，適合用來烹調多種美食

By Rachel Duffell

### 1 Chips 薯條

French fries to the North American, chips to the British, and *frites* to the Belgians, these batonnet-cut deep-fried potatoes, which can be thin- or thick-cut, are most at home in fast-food restaurants, pubs and bars. Generally twice cooked in hot fat for a crispier final product – floury potatoes are best – they are salted and, particularly when they accompany battered or breaded fish in the UK, served with a splash of vinegar. In Canada they might be topped with cheese curds and gravy, in a dish known as poutine. The French and the Belgians both claim to have invented French fries but the jury remains out.

薯條在北美叫做French fries（法式薯條），英國稱之為chips，比利時則名為frites，有的切得比較粗，有的比較幼，最常見於快餐店和酒吧。薯條通常會在滾油中炸兩次，這樣表面會更香脆。用來做薯條的薯仔以質地較粉的最佳。薯條一般會用鹽調味，英國的炸魚（裹上麵糊或麵包糠炸成的魚塊）薯條通常還會灑上一點醋。在加拿大，有一道名為肉汁芝士薯條的美食，在薯條上鋪上熱融的芝士和肉汁，非常惹味。法國人和比利時人都聲稱自己是法式薯條的發明者，但仍未有定論。



### 2 Crisps 薯片

Potato chips or crisps vary wildly in quality, from hand-cut heirloom potatoes fried in the finest olive oil to your typical Lays Lightly Salted. Floury varieties – russet or Maris Piper – are preferred, sliced as thinly as possible: the mandoline is the perfect tool, to ensure they cook through and crisp properly before burning. It's important to bring down starch content by soaking prior to frying (for best results) or baking, then seasoning with the desired spice, salt and pepper while still hot.

薯片的品質以南轅北轍，從採用復古薯仔以頂級橄欖油炸成的手切薯片，到經典的樂事少鹽薯片，豐儉由人。用來做薯片的薯仔，以質地較粉的品種為佳，如褐皮和常見的Maris Piper品種。為了確保薯片不會在炸熟前就變成焦黑一片，切片宜薄，最好是用刨刀。薯片須先用水浸泡以降低澱粉含量後才拿去油炸（效果最佳）或烤熟，這個步驟非常關鍵。最後趁熱灑上喜歡的香料、鹽、胡椒調味。



### 4 Roasted 烤薯仔

The perfect roast potato, traditionally part of an English Sunday roast, is fluffy on the inside and crispy on the outside. This is achieved with a more mealy variety of potato as it's the floury edges that crisp up during roasting. Maris Piper are the roasting tattie of choice – peel, par-boil, shake in the pan to roughen the edges and put into a roasting tin with the hot fat of your choice – goose or duck fat is the ultimate indulgence.

傳統上，烤薯仔是英式星期日烤肉大餐的其中一員。完美的烤薯仔應該是外面酥脆、內部鬆化，而要做到外脆，須選用質地較粉的薯仔如Maris Piper品種等，因為邊緣的粉狀部分會在烘烤過程中變得香脆。烤薯仔的做法是，削皮、用水煮到半熟，丟進鍋裡把表面煎硬，然後放在已塗上自己喜歡的熱油的烤盤上拿去烤燜。你可以選擇豐腴、齒頰留香的鵝油或鴨油，讓味道更濃郁。



### 7 Mashed 薯蓉

Higher starch potatoes, such as russets, produce a mash that is fluffier, more flavourful and creamier. All-purpose potatoes, such as Yukon Gold, also work well. It's served as a side in classic British recipes including bubble and squeak or bangers and mash, or as part of a Shepherd's pie, though many other culinary traditions make use of mashed potatoes. In Ireland, it can be combined with kale or cabbage in colcannon, or with spring onions for its champ; elsewhere in the world it's used as a filling in treats from piroshkis and samosas to croquettes.

澱粉質較高的品種如褐皮薯仔和百搭的Yukon Gold薯仔等，可以做出質地更軟滑、味道更濃郁的薯蓉。傳統英國菜式總會找到薯蓉的蹤跡，譬如捲心菜煎薯餅、香腸薯蓉和牧羊人餡餅等。薯蓉也見於許多其他地方的菜式中：在愛爾蘭，有由青蔥混和薯蓉及由羽衣甘藍或捲心菜混和薯蓉的傳統美食；在世界其他角落，薯蓉常常被拿來當小吃的內餡，如東歐餡餅、咖喱角和炸薯餅等。



### 5 New potatoes 新薯

These are freshly dug, young potatoes, generally small and usually waxy in texture with a thin skin. They are best boiled and slathered with butter or included in salads as they hold their shape well during cooking. In Scandinavia you will find them served unpeeled with dill and herring.

這些新鮮挖掘、種植時間較短的薯仔，個子通常較小，皮薄，質地比較爽脆。新薯適宜用水煮熟後塗上厚厚的牛油享用，或是用來做沙律，因為它們不那麼容易煮爛。北歐人喜歡以連皮的新薯配時蔬和鯡魚。



### 3 Gnocchi 意式糰子

The recipe for these soft dumplings varies across Italy but some gnocchi is made with potatoes, which are boiled and mixed with flour and egg to form a dough. They are then shaped into one-inch pieces and cooked like pasta in salted boiling water and served with sauce, commonly as a first course. Starchy potatoes make for a lighter, fluffier dumpling. While gnocchi is thought to date back to Roman times, the potato version came later following the introduction of the spud to Europe in the 16th century.

口感軟糯的糰子在意大利不同地方有不同的做法，其中之一是以煮熟的薯仔與麵粉和雞蛋混合成麵團，再搓成一吋大的糰子。煮意式糰子的方法跟意大利粉一樣，先在鹽水中煮熟，然後拌上醬汁享用，通常作為頭盤。澱粉豐富的薯仔可以做出輕盈、軟糯的糰子。意式糰子的歷史據說可追溯到羅馬時代，但用薯仔做的糰子則要等到歐洲於16世紀引入薯仔後才出現。



### 6 Potato starch 薯粉

Potatoes are crushed to release their starch grains, which are then dried to form a powder that is used as a thickener or binder, often in soups and sauces.

薯仔壓碎後會釋出澱粉顆粒，將這些澱粉顆粒弄乾便變成薯粉。它通常用於湯和醬汁，可令湯汁質地變得濃稠。



### 8 Vodka 伏特加

Potatoes are often associated with vodka, but in fact only a small proportion of vodka is actually made using the trusty spud. Vodka made from potatoes seems to have been introduced in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in Poland, while Sweden also favoured potatoes for the spirit. Originally, potatoes provided a cheap base material for vodka and created a fairly neutral spirit that was well suited to mixed drinks, though today some quality vodka brands use heirloom varieties for enhanced flavour.

說到伏特加，許多人會聯想到薯仔，但其實只有少部分伏特加是用薯仔釀製。用薯仔釀造伏特加始於18世紀末、19世紀初的波蘭，瑞典人也愛用薯仔釀製伏特加。最初會用薯仔釀伏特加，是因為材料便宜，而且釀成的酒基本上沒有味道，適合用來調配酒精飲品。不過今天，有優質的伏特加品牌採用復古薯仔來提升酒的味道。

